# THE CHRIST OF GOD

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# THE CHRIST OF GOD

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# THE CHRIST OF GOD

BY

S. PARKES CADMAN, D.D., LL.D.

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THEIR PERSONAL KINDNESS TO THE AUTHOR
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THEIR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE CIVIC AND CULTURAL LIFE OF
THE CITY OF CHICAGO
AND
THE COMMONWEALTH OF ILLINOIS

## PREFACE

The chapters of this book were originally given as lectures on the Shaffer Foundation before The Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and are published at the request of The University Faculty. I am greatly indebted to the Reverend Oscar L. Joseph, Litt.D., and Professor Edwin Lewis, D.D., for their help in the preparation of the book for publication.

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# THE CHRIST OF GOD

# THE CHRIST OF GOD

## Chapter I

## THE CHRIST OF CHRISTIAN TRADITION

No issue before the human mind to-day is fraught with greater importance than a correct apprehension of the significance of Jesus. He has always compelled the reverent attention of reflective and serious people. Their response to His supreme religious genius demonstrates how deeply it has absorbed the variant multitudes who have expressed their consciousness of Him in speech, in literature, in art, in architecture, and chiefly in their efforts to emulate His example and to do His will. The historic theological controversies waged around His person and mission manifest the eagerness of the disputants rightly to understand the purpose of His being. Our ambiguous era is preoccupied with a multiplicity of perplexing

problems. But none of them is more challenging in nature or vital in result than the answer to that old inquiry: "What think ye of Christ?"

Scholars who do anything, however imperfect, toward establishing a larger, clearer vision of Him, help to satisfy the world's sorest need. Saints whose fellowship with Him penetrates behind learned opinions and intellectual attitudes perceive Him superior to changing categories and forms of thought, and their experience illuminates the discussion. Every sincere approach to Jesus is more or less contributory to the general welfare. His revelation of the invisible God has in it the opulence of true life. His consciousness of the All Father was supplemented by His familiarity with the world of the here and now. His standards of man's ethical and spiritual relationship to the seen and unseen worlds necessitate the consideration not only of philosophy and theology, but of science and psychology, of politics and economics. His teaching and the elements it introduced or

sanctioned bear on the totality of human existence here and hereafter. Nor can what He authorized be ignored or violated without jeopardizing that existence. It is therefore gratifying to observe that an increasing number of men and women are convinced that civilization's beneficial progress must be more directly swayed by the motives and the principles of Jesus.

Amid the volcanic upheavals and driftings of time He remains the watershed of faith for Christians, and for many non-Christians who accept the spiritual order. Whatever came before Him predicted Him; all that followed Him proceeded afresh from Him. He is the Lord of the House of Life, and the Friend and Lover of its occupants. His compassionate regard for sentient creation made His sacrificial service a delight. "He went about doing good not with a sense of duty, but with that sense of peace that comes to any creature in the fulfilment of its being." [1] The vision of truth and its beauty has been vouchsafed to

[1] William Ellery Leonard: *The Poet of Galilee*, p. 34.

devout and gifted souls in every age. But the choicest spirits among them only approximated its wider ranges. Jesus is the sole exception. In Him "there shines more of the unexplored and mysterious goodness of this universe, and in Him there is more promise of that unimaginable blessedness that may sometime flood the world, than in any other. Through Him we make better contacts with that which lifts the values of human life to the highest level." [2]

The majority believe in Him, not on metaphysical or psychological but on experimental grounds. Yet their experience is far from being exclusively subjective. It originates in the individual, to be tested and confirmed by the consentient testimony of the Christian centuries, and of the Church as God's most characteristic creation in Christianity. Such a combination checks the vagaries of emotionalism and tones down the extravagances of fanaticism. It enlists the support of substantiated facts; blends the ideal with the real, and cor-

[2] Henry N. Wieman: *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, p. 127.

roborates its claims by the unbiased results of historical investigation. The problem of relating faith to history is always with us. Lessing was doubtless correct in his assertion that "contingent truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason." This judgment was evoked, however, by the emphasis of eighteenth-century apologetics upon miracles as a convincing evidence of the credibility of Christianity. But the prevalent theology of to-day is disposed to agree with Bergson that intuition rather than reason is the creative faculty of our highest knowledge. Faith also is reason in its loftiest mood; a spiritual determination based on loyalty to conscience and the law of right, and not upon ratiocination.[3] From this viewpoint religious beliefs are not entirely dependent upon alleged historical events any more than upon dogmatic declarations, though both have their place and meaning as secondary lines of proof. The time has certainly passed, if it ever was, in

[3] Cf. D. M. Baillie: *Faith in God and Its Christian Consummation*, p. 231ff.

which the oldest Christian literature could be treated as a tissue of forgeries and deceptions. For scientific inquiry it was an episode, "in which," to quote Harnack, "much was learnt and after which much must be forgotten." The general position and particular details of that literature may be accepted as trustworthy. But it is through personality, whether human or divine, as the gateway of all revelation, that we possess and exercise the faith that matters.

In His personality Jesus offers us the manifestation of God, not by a series of impressive truths concerning Deity, but by the far more compelling instrumentality of His own actual being and character, which originated in His total consciousness of oneness with the Father. In this respect Jesus was "the pioneer and perfection of faith," [4] who as "the Supreme Believer" realized in Himself the fulfillment of the twofold quest of God after man and

[4] Hebrews xii. 2. The Bible text used in this book is taken from the American Standard Edition of the Revised Bible, copyright 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons, and is used by permission.

of man after God. Hence the unique significance of Christianity is found, not in its enunciation of the twin verities of Divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood, but in the incarnation of those verities in the person of our Lord. Here we confront the Eternal One, and the believer in a Christlike God finds in Christ a climax and a theme, a motive and a spirit, which reveal God's deepest nature. In other words, God is in Christ, as He is not elsewhere, reconciling the world to Himself.[5]

We confess Jesus as the Word of the Father in the sense that He is the ultimate expression of His love and justice as the Redeeming God. To be sure, He is the Jesus of history, and not merely a symbolical idealization. The theory of the Christ myth is a plausible explanation which defies the specific data of the Gospels, and resorts to sophisticated speculations, under the cover of the curious pretension prevalent among ultra liberals that they investigate without prejudice. Their conclusions, which belong to the developments of the Ra-

[5] Cf. Francis J. McConnell: *The Christlike God*, p. 135.

tionalist Movement from 1830 to the present day, are now looked upon as fundamentally wrong, even by radical critics. Further, Jesus is the Christ of faith in the profound sense that He has been received by successive generations of believers as the Revealer of spiritual perfection, and the sole Mediator between God and man. Their witness is both subjectively mystical and objectively historical. Whether we take counsel with the New Testament or heed the voice of Christian history, the outcome is the same. It is that the influence of Jesus, which for nineteen centuries has molded and guided the worthwhile life of mankind, has not been generated by a phantom projected by religious rapture into the realm of imagination, but by a dynamic personality of exhaustless power. The Gospels and Epistles are a record of extraordinary spiritual contacts and interpretations which derive from Him. The experiences they relate have been measurably repeated in the Church, *ubique, semper et ab omnibus.*

It is conceded that the conceptions of the

Apostolic writers have to be modernized because they are conveyed in by-gone tongues, and "are entangled with traditions and philosophies which have grown strange to us. How can we recover them in their inner significance? What do they mean when we try to express them in those forms of thought which are most vital for us?" [6] The same difficulty holds in reference to the Christian concepts of nearly every period. But this will not dismay those who realize the formidable barriers inherent in language as the medium of ideas. These barriers yield to the processes of linguistics, the methods of logic, and the application of psychological factors. Obscure or outworn formulæ cannot conceal the identical experiences of the Divine life, which underlie the vast variations of human thought and speech. We are also justified in appealing to the creeds, provided we treat them as statements of the faith of their respective periods, without the final authority which is Christ's alone. They bear

[6] E. F. Scott: "The Limitations of the Historical Method" in *Studies in Early Christianity*, edited by Shirley J. Case, p. 17.

the marks of theological and philosophical controversies, some of which are recurrent, while others have sunk below the level of curiosity. The question they at least suggest, and which all previous Christian belief and history emphasize, is whether the Christ who was the guiding star of those creeds is the Illuminant of our own age. Does He still lead us on the altar stairs that slope through darkness up to God? Can He make Himself known to our generation, as the all-sufficient Savior, and the Lord of good life?

II

Several preliminary considerations merit attention. Let us agree with Aristotle that man is a political animal, whose communal existence is indispensable to his complete self-realization. Let us further agree that history's latest phases, which stress the economic factor as the governing force of social movements, have in them moral elements deserving approval. Yet the individual deludes himself who dreams that any social or political Utopia would end man's aspirations, or appease his hunger for the

things of the Spirit. However well contrived and ordered, such a temporal paradise could not silence the soul's insurgent questionings, nor solve its hardest problems, nor engage its superior functions. Despite the ameliorating drift of earthly circumstances, there is still a huge hiatus in human life, which provokes skepticism, discontent, and the sense of wasted energies. These agitations are quite as conspicuous among leisured and cultured groups as among the industrious, the ignorant, or the poor. Despite their affluence or destitution they look before and after, and sigh for what is not. The satiety of wealth and the world's wearying honors chafe their owners no less than the deprivations and embarrassments of poverty afflict the unprivileged multitudes. If the rejuvenated social estate so many desiderate to-day were theirs to-morrow, they would discern beyond its equities and adjustments the more spacious horizons which excite fresh longings and bolder experiments. And this for the reason, as Principal John Caird said in the temper of the best idealism, that the human

soul is the seat of a potential infinitude, by virtue of which it finds a limit only to be inspired to transcend it.

There is another fixed quality of human nature which remains changeless amid ceaseless change. It monopolizes all ranks and conditions: princes and peoples, literates and illiterates, capitalists and industrialists. It is that quality which compels man to estimate his own life: the self-security which Spinoza said should proceed *sub specie eternitatis*. This inquisition makes him aware that he is a pilgrim of the infinite, a seemingly weak yet mysteriously mighty being; apparently at the mercy of Nature's ruthless and gigantic forces, yet forever beyond their governance. It is the fascinating secret of our kind that its spiritual possibilities transcend its sensory endowments. Man may have many fetters, but he can always be unbound at the center from which things are perceived and appraised. Invincible alliances with "the powers of the world to come," and wholesale commitments to whatever they shall determine for him, are his possessions by the

grace of God. His imagination constructs an ethereal universe which transcends his actual surroundings. These, charm they never so wisely, cannot dissipate his fears, nor ease the doubts that dim his prospects, nor stay the lashings of his violated conscience, nor dominate the promptings of his will or the impulses of his heart. Hence he is by nature religious, and can no more help being so than he can help being a social and political being.

Here, where two worlds meet in man, often antagonistically, Jesus enters the situation to transform it. The differences already mentioned, which He introduced elsewhere in society and its organizations, are traceable to the one supreme and controlling difference which He established in human relations with the Unseen. Whatever we conceive of God, the race, the moral order, the universe, or of its ultimate purpose, has a *rationale,* of which for His followers Jesus is the norm. Those who feel obligated to account for His intervention in a systematic world, which tolerates no haphazard events and connects all that is with pre-

existent causes, must face the fact that in such a uniform and ordered world Jesus has historically appeared. Account for His coming as we may, its reality is registered in the Christianity which owes to Him its origin and direction. Admitting for the moment the naturalistic explanation that he was simply a member of the human race, and as much its product as any other member of that race, what follows? The fact that, notwithstanding all drawbacks, the normal course of things proved equal to His production: a sequence which frustrates fatalistic verdicts imbued with prevalent pessimism upon that race. How can we despair of a humanity which brought God's Hero to birth at Bethlehem?

Those who maintain that the young Jew who came to hear John the Baptist, and convinced him that He was the promised Messiah, was the Son of God in a singular and supreme sense, assert, in harmony with the New Testament Scriptures, that this Joshua (a name of which Jesus, meaning "Jehovah saves," is the Greek form) broke into our realm from the In-

finite Beyond. He was not an emergent from within humanity, but its Creator's supreme self-manifestation of Himself to His offspring. Contrary to common opinion, these two explanations are not mutually exclusive, and their inconsistency is apparent rather than real. They find their reconciliation in the personality of our Lord. His character warrants our faith in the actual operation of the supernatural within His strange eventful history. It shows the development of the natural into the spiritual order. It is so charged with ethical and spiritual authority as to become the means of a Divine regeneration in multitudes.[7] According to Sophocles, "Nature's dice are always loaded." In this particular instance they revolutionized man's religious fortunes. So whether Jesus sprang from the racial stock with which He identified Himself as the Son of Man, or from the very heart of the Eternal God as His Only Begotten Son, makes little practical difference so far as His salvatory significance for mankind is concerned. In either case its spirit-

[7] Cf. George Galloway: *Religion and Modern Thought*, p. 332.

ual renewal and its destiny are centered in Him alone. He is the best that can be of our flesh and blood, and His being reveals limitless potentialities for good in man. No world to which He belongs can be placed under sentence of death. We are justified in entertaining the liveliest expectations for its moral renewal, and in asserting that even those estimates of His origin which are reckoned heterodox flatly contradict the impersonal, mechanical and purposeless theories of current materialism. In Him resistless redemptive agencies have appropriated our earthly existence as their realm, wherein, sooner or later, the Spirit of the Christ shall reign. He has become, as St. Paul averred, "the First-born among many brethren." [8]

But if, as the Church teaches, He was God's actual and unique gift of Himself to humanity, then Christ is forever the revelation of Him who sent Him forth. Apart from this revelation, the Deity as conceived by us is not intelligible, since the attributes we associate with

[8] Cf. H. Wildon Carr: *The Unique Status of Man*, p. 17ff.

His nature have their sole warrant in the human order. Here then are two conceptions of His person. If we accept the "natural" theory, it still remains that the life of which He was the consummate flower is a life in which truth, grace and holiness are immanent. If we accept the supernatural theory, the transcendent Deity has unveiled Himself to mankind once and for all in Jesus. Yet whether we accept Him as immanent or transcendent, or as both combined, He is none the less the fountain of that knowledge of God, in which stands our eternal life and freedom.

Again, if God is the Father Jesus represented Him to be, our whole outlook on life is transfigured. The very "winds are henceforth voices; never a senseless gust." All things are ours since we are Christ's, and He is God's. The speech which to the unbelieving mind is sound and fury, signifying nothing, to the mind which is "in Christ" becomes a celestial language. Why is this? Because the human mind is necessarily interpretative, and this function obtains its noblest results when exercised upon

the person, the work and the teachings of Jesus. To enlarge upon these claims would be to attempt a close analysis of His entire career, and this is not within my purpose even were it within my power. Yet by every indication we can gather, He knew His own vocation. At His baptism He was anointed for His great mission, and understood that henceforth He was to fulfill in Himself all those lines of thought which He had learned in the Scriptures, including "all righteousness," as His sinless soul conceived that righteousness.[9]

Since man's religious nature is his outstanding characteristic, which he shares with nothing else in creation, whoever is supreme for him in the moral and spiritual realm enjoys a permanent supremacy. This is so true of Jesus in our experience, that what He transmits about God and His designs is stamped with finality. Its essentials may be condensed into His single phrase, *Holy Father*—a revelatory saying religion will never outgrow and in which deeper

[9] Cf. Arthur C. Headlam: *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ,* p. 150ff.

and richer meanings are ever discernible. It was the fruit of His filial relation with God and of God's paternal relation with Him. The name Father He constantly and exclusively gives to God; the name Son He assumes Himself. His private devotions, His public ministries, His high priestly prayer, His deeds, discourses and parables clearly show that the sustaining principle of our Lord's life and being and likewise the gist of His message arose out of His absorbent consciousness of the Eternal Father of all spirits.[10]

His followers repeat the words of the ancient creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth." But who among them has even faintly realized the magnitudes of love and justice implicit in this historic confession? Did it have actual control as it has moral authority, it would indeed reinterpret Heaven and Earth for us. If the Creator has toward us none but parental aims, the human situation despite its perplexing difficul-

[10] Cf. Auguste Sabatier: *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 148f.

ties is rife with everlasting benevolence. That Jesus thus believed and taught is indisputable. But before men can visualize what arises out of and is involved in that belief and teaching, they must share the temper and the attitude of Jesus. He exemplified His measureless faith and devotion by His meek submission to sacrificial travail because it was the Father's will. Dante's moving line sums up the sequel: *In la sua volentade e nostra pace,* "In His Will is our peace."

Further, some progress is here made in reading the riddle of the universe. The Fatherhood of God, as the source of Christ's life and message, elucidates the Creator's ways in creation. This is desirable, especially in Christian apologetics, for nothing has so hampered the faith of countless sincere souls as the order of Nature. The history of intelligent skepticism is largely the history of adverse judgments on the course of events. From Lucretius to Darwin, it has been reckoned an act of credulity to contend that the natural order is the ordination of an Almighty Father. Yet if such is not the

case, the guidance of Jesus collapses at a crucial stage where men have always craved direction. On the other hand, the acceptance of Christ's revelation of God necessitates the acceptance of that which is implicit in the revelation. The cosmos, notwithstanding its bewildering stupendousness and complexity, fulfills the majestic purposes of its Presiding Mind. It neither hastes nor rests in its execution of His grand design: steadily pursuing its ageless course toward the goal of righteous and holy being, passing from life to more life, from peace to greater peace. Those who reject this interpretation remind us of the difficulties which it does not remove for them. Without doubt these are real, and likely to continue, since so long as the finite is impotent to grasp the infinite, many pressing questions cannot be answered in the present world. But what of the far greater difficulties involved in the skeptical position? It may be hard to believe what our Lord's words imply concerning the natural order. It is certainly harder not to believe them. The souls which courageously make the

venture are rewarded by an intellectual consistency and a moral steadfastness, which those who decline to make it cannot find in their negativism.

III

Finally, we here obtain light on the moral order. I am not unaware of the efforts that have been made to show that the ethical is no more than the customary, while the customary is simply that which experience has proved to be prudent and helpful. There is an echo of the Spencerian philosophy, demolished by Doctor Borden P. Bowne thirty years ago, in Professor William James' assertion that " 'the true' is only the expedient in the way of our thinking, just as 'the right' is only the expedient in the way of our behaving." [11] One is reluctant to think that the professor meant all this quotation seems to imply. To reduce morality to expediency is admissible only by giving the latter term a far deeper ethical connotation than it ordinarily conveys. Mortals

[11] *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, p. 222.

have often been guilty of flagrant crimes because they conceived these expedient. But if we say that Jesus went to the cross because it was more expedient for Him to endure than to avoid it, do we here illustrate an expediency according to Professor James' theory? Quite otherwise. The natural thing for Jesus to do was to avoid the cross, but when He voluntarily embraced it, He showed that the natural and the moral are not identities, but that the natural is the setting for the exhibition, the cultivation and the achievement of the moral. Here, in Keats' words, an unfriendly environment becomes "the vale of soul making."

If we see God in Christ and in man, surely we see all else in Him. The whole cosmic process is perceptible as something projected and sustained by the universal Father for "bringing many sons unto glory," of whom Jesus Himself is the prototype. Why wonder then that Christlikeness has become the human ideal? What can we discover which is superior in thought or deed to His manner of life? In Him God imparts Himself to man in His self-

realizing paternity, and man surrenders himself to God in his self-realizing sonship. Religious certitude is accomplished "when these two terms, God and man, opposed to each other at the origin of conscious life, interpenetrate each other till they reach the moral unity of love, in which God becomes interior to man and lives in him, in which man becomes interior to God, and finds in Him the full expansion of his being. *Christianity is therefore the absolute and final religion of mankind.*" [12]

This is the main burden of what follows in the present discussion. The personal, social, political, industrial and cultural life of the world owes far more to Jesus Christ than to any other being who ever lived. But our concern is chiefly with the unspeakable difference Jesus originated in religion. He has given the race not only an adequate and satisfying idea of God, but also a conception of man which finds imperishable values in His personality,

[12] Auguste Sabatier, *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion*, p. 150f.

His activities and His circumstances. He has shed the healing radiance of a Father's ethical love on the sins and sorrows of the common lot. He has taught all and sundry that beyond the horizons which hem us in there is "still more sea." He has manifested in Himself the perfection of our spiritual nature, and thus become for believers the true and living way into the Holy of Holies. He has presented to the world that immortal type of character which presages the soul's ultimate emancipation from iniquity and despair.

The elect among the blessed, such as St. Paul and St. John, St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine, St. Francis and St. Theresa, Lancelot Andrewes and John Bunyan unitedly exalt in their experience that regenerating power of Jesus which is yet to be attained by those who love and obey Him. Abandonment to His will shall then transform the libertine; dismiss those specters of the mind which prevent confidence in sincere seekers after God; convert the mammonite into a philanthropist, and the victim of

self-obsession, ambitious for place and power, into a willing servant of his fellows. In brief, everything man needs to garrison the citadel of his spiritual nature this Redeemer and Regenerator abundantly supplies. His compassion for the shepherdless ones; His charity for the outcast and the degraded; His sympathy with childhood's innocence; His insight, searching the most remote crevices of the soul with the candle of the Lord, were not so much parts of a conscious program, as activities native to His divine being. Truly He "laid hold on the seed of Abraham," and federalized in Himself the whole human family. Its efforts to escape His gracious sway succumbed to His genius for its apprehension.

Hence the question again: "What think ye of Christ?" Forget past speculations about Him. Forget the metaphysics of the confessional Creeds. Forget there ever were such valiant doctors and opponents as Nestorius, Apollinaris, Eutyches, Arius, Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria. Allow the great Fathers and the equally great Scholastics, who so ably

interpreted Jesus for their own and after ages, to sink out of sight. Call a truce between the warring camps of Modernism and Fundamentalism. Haul down their ragged banners, and clear the arena for the entrance of the Lord of us all. Take nothing but the palpable facts of this inquiry as found in the New Testament; in Christian history and experience; in the multiform agencies of the organized Church. What do these facts signify? No better answer can be found than that which was given in the earliest Christian literature; and has since been indorsed by numberless disciples of the Master, belonging to every tribe and nation. He is "the Head of the Body, the Church": He is "the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preëminence. For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell." "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." He is "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." He is "the Word, who became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of

grace and truth." [13] This is the Truth of and about Christ, which has done His work in the world, and transmitted His life to the sons of men. All helpful Christian thinking and doctrine owe their virtue to the concepts evoked by the influence of Jesus upon those who beheld His glory in the days of His flesh.

"In reverent adoration we turn our thoughts toward Him by whose side no other can stand, and with a conviction that we cannot escape, and which the ripening experience of life only serves to make stronger, we exclaim: *Here* is that Sonship that is 'coeternal and consubstantial with the Father.' *Here* is that truth and grace, that love and holiness which are enshrined in the very heart of the Eternal Being. *Here* is the Light that lighteth every man coming into the world. *Here* is what men have ever groped for, and concerning which God has nowhere left Himself wholly without witness. . . . *Here* is the promise and power of human

[13] Colossians i. 18f.; II Corinthians v. 19; Revelation xxii. 13; St. John i. 14.

redemption—the earnest that struggling and disrupted humanity shall finally become one Family, moved by One Spirit, and forever bearing One Name." [14]

[14] Edwin Lewis: *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest,* p. 346.

## CHAPTER II

# THE THREEFOLD APPROACH TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST

Emerson said, "The Name of Jesus is not so much written as ploughed into the history of the world." Men may differ about the application of His ideals to human affairs, or protest that modern society cannot be organized on His precepts. But those who insist that life's well-being depends upon obedience to His teaching and example preponderate in numbers and influence. There is a general agreement that His standards are the criteria of ethical judgments. To understand the transformations wrought by the Personality of Jesus Christ, we should approach it from every possible angle. First, the documents which contain the sufficient accounts of His career should be studied. Second, the experiences of His steadfast disciples should be kept steadily in view. Third, the organic witness of the

Christian Church to her Founder, expressed in her sacramental, theological and evangelizing energies, should be treated as genuine evidence. The exclusion of any one of these avenues of approach will result in inadequate conceptions of Him, and lead to erroneous evaluations of His mission. Scholars who rely solely upon the documents in the case face the frequent and sometimes incapacitating hazards of literary transmission. The limitations of authors, however venerable and gifted they may be, are reflected in their writings: a rule which obtains in sacred as well as secular literature. It is scarcely possible to obtain a sufficient knowledge of Julius Caesar from his *Commentaries* or other records concerning him, unless his concrete achievements in expanding and welding together the Roman Empire, and in shaping the political and social evolution of Western nations, are brought into the picture. Similarly those who endeavor to interpret Jesus exclusively by the canonical Gospels and Epistles omit a large amount of available material essential for their aim.

The Psychological Reconstructionist, who at the moment occupies the center of the stage in Christological discussions, is as liable to miss his mark as the Traditionalist, the Apocalyptist, the Ethicist or the Skeptic. Each of the groups specified has its valuable contribution to make to an undertaking of the first magnitude. But no one of them singly and alone is competent to render a balanced and an all-round conception of Jesus.

(1) The Traditionalist confines his apologetic to the verbal accuracy of the New Testament writings as a Divine revelation infallibly given and received. He further supposes they were thus transmitted under conditions which practically obliterated the individuality of their authors, reducing them to a state of mentality virtually identical with that of hypnosis. He claims in behalf of this literalism that the Evangelists and Apostles portrayed a Figure of godlike perfection, immaculate in every particular, and entirely free from the possibility of error. Moreover, as he regards them, these portrayals are final and complete:

nothing can be added to or taken from them. Such a claim is symptomatic of a defective intellectual attitude prolific of needless difficulties. Nineteen centuries of Christian history largely dominated by Jesus as the Christ, not only of the Church, but of the whole fabric of advanced society, are treated as though they were negligible in behalf of a theory of Holy Scripture which cannot be sustained. An isolated view of the Master is hereby permanently confined to certain categories which, however spacious and commanding, have since been supplemented by other categories derived from the actual experience of countless believers in the various ages of the Christian dispensation. Consider, for instance, the admirable elucidations of this question in our own day of the late Professor William Newton Clarke, Professor H. R. Mackintosh, Principal Alfred E. Garvie and Professor Edwin Lewis. Their interpretations of Jesus follow the clue first suggested by August Dorner, who argued that the Incarnation was not a precipitate intervention of the Divine Nature in human life, but an

ordered unveiling from God manward, and a correspondingly historical development from man Godward, of which Jesus is the nexus and consummation.

Professor Lloyd Morgan in his Gifford Lectures on *Life, Mind and Spirit,* projects the evolutionary hypothesis into the debate by his contention that although the life movement is, as science teaches, an unbroken continuity, any *one* of its emergents is more than the mere sum of its antecedents. General Jan Christian Smuts airs a kindred concept in the philosophical hypothesis of Nature's inherent developments which he terms *Holism.* Both these thinkers show traces of the influence of Bergson's *Creative Evolution,* and furnish the intelligent Christian, cleric or layman, with fresh and impressive backgrounds for his belief in Jesus as the crown of God's creative purpose in redemption. Their broad, constructive reasonings vindicate our instinctive rejection of what Professor Pringle-Pattison describes as "the lower Naturalism," by which he means the prevalent habit of interpreting the superior

forms and values of life by their historical origins alone.[1]

In one notable respect Professor Morgan and General Smuts were anticipated by John Stuart Mill. The strange blend of Scotch common sense and Gallican political fervor which colored many of Mill's utterances induced men of opposite parties and opinions to shelter their diversities under the protection of his great name. His *Logic* dealt in a masterly way with the problems of knowledge as these bear upon man's connection with the physical universe. But the Utilitarian position he assumed exposed his reasonings to the damaging criticisms of Professor F. H. Bradley, whose *Principles of Logic* have made some of Mill's arguments archaic. He asserted historical sociology cannot admit that in the world's development a character could arise which had no relation to the past and no roots in existing conditions. Yet he conceded that Jesus was charged with "a special express and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth

[1] Cf. *The Idea of God*, p. 88ff.

and virtue." [2] This quotation is taken from his familiar tribute to Christ as still left to us, whatever else may be taken away by rationalism's forays upon faith. It is greatly to the credit of Mill that, though he began his intellectual life deeply alienated from the Christian revelation by his father's insolent metaphysic, he nevertheless steadily rose to so noble an appreciation of its central Personality. And if some twentieth-century moralists and metaphysicians more clearly apprehend the significance of Jesus, it is because they stand on Mill's shoulders.

Yet such attempts to prepare the way for "the larger Christ who is to be" are arbitrarily repudiated by the Traditionalist. He impeaches Christian and scientific thinkers alike when they suggest new methods which emphasize the immense differential the Master created in human development.

(2) The Apocalyptist is also confident that he can successfully plow his solitary furrow, and interpret our Lord according to the times

[2] Cf. *Essays on Religion*, p. 255.

in which He lived, with scrupulous regard for His actual historical matrix. He is at the poles from the Traditionalist in some important issues, yet at one with him in his reliance upon the written Gospels. So the Apocalyptist makes no concession to other interpretations of Christ's life, which are dictated by the experience of its regenerating power. His standpoint moreover is entirely too subjective and therefore unscientific. He is committed to the idea that Jesus anticipated an imminent catastrophe, to be speedily succeeded by the inauguration of His personal sovereignty in a glorified world. This typically Semitic conception is advanced as the only motivating impulse of His teaching concerning the unfolding Kingdom of God, which is to spread as leaven in the meal through the oncoming ages, and grow from small beginnings, like the mustard seed, until it shall embrace the whole range of human life. Dean Inge well observes that much apocalyptism during the last century B.C. and the first century A.D. was "a compromise between the religion of rewards and punishments

and the religion of spiritual deliverance." [3] In this respect it totally differed from the stress which our Lord's prophetism laid upon the ever-increasing reign of the Divine righteousness in the far-reaching vistas of the future. Harnack, in his well-known volume, *The Essence of Christianity,* reiterates the vital importance of Jesus as the prophet and teacher, and shows that His authority consisted in truths originative in Himself, independent of the contemporary theologies of His time. On the other hand Schweitzer, in *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* and Warschauer in *The Historical Life of Christ,* cling to the apocalyptic principle as the explanation of the Jesus of history. To be sure, He accepted the apocalyptic outlook of His day, but His real message was independent of it. He demanded a new life of fellowship with God, which contemplated progressive advance toward perfection for all mankind. It is therefore sheer assumption to regard Jesus as absorbed in a wholesale apocalyptism. This would constitute Him an

[3] *Outspoken Essays,* First Series, p. 247.

unbalanced and shortsighted propagandist of mediocre ideas and of a provincial cast of mind.

(3) The Ethicist starts out with the Apocalyptist, but they part company on the question of Christ's moral teachings and whether these have more than temporary significance. The Ethicist maintains as against the Apocalyptist that the paternalistic theism of the Master's Sermon on the Mount and the ethical imperatives of His discourses were not intended by Him to serve as a bridge between a world that was dying, and one about to be born in a cataclysmic upheaval. Such utterances possessed permanent values beyond the shock of every convulsive circumstance. But in acknowledging that Jesus reflected the apocalyptic ideas of His time, the Ethicist fails to distinguish between His intrinsic message concerning the universal Fatherhood of God, and the nationalistic outlook of contemporary Judaism. This failure betrays an obliviousness to the transcendent worth of our Lord as the superb religious genius, not only of His day, but of all time. His proclamation of an ideal social order

to be perpetuated in individual piety, and by the establishment of national and international relations upon a purely spiritual basis, sanctions and amplifies the noblest prophecies of Israel's seers and of the world's best idealism.

(4) The Skeptic, keenly aware of the disparities and contradictions already noted, maintains that no trustworthy conception of Jesus is possible. Wrede, the German savant, avows that after years of patient investigation, he is unable to reproduce from the New Testament's material a consistent and verifiable presentation of the Master as a historic personality. The late Georg Brandes declared in his last book that Christ was a lovely myth, and thereby voiced the belief of other radical speculators, who view the Gospels as the work of a brilliant but unlicensed imagination. Their verdict is a virtual disavowal of historical veracity and an admission of intellectual and spiritual prejudice.

(5) The Psychologist is attracted by the sociological benefits of Christ's message. But he denies on *a priori* grounds the validity of

the Divine portrait contained in the Gospels and Epistles, and thus implicitly invalidates the results of historical criticism. Christianity stands or falls with the conviction that Jesus walked this earth as the Word made flesh, and that in Him the Everlasting One manifested Himself in Time for the salvation of the world. It heralds an Evangel of universal Redemption which is inwoven with human history, and must therefore have been in some manner conditioned by it.[4] If no such person as Jesus existed historically, as the Psychologist avers, it is necessary to discover behind this mythical being the resplendent mind which enunciated the ideals attributed to Jesus. The attempt to do so, begun somewhat clumsily by the late President G. Stanley Hall, has since been furthered by more competent theological scholars. Georges Berguer, in *Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus,* and Professor Shirley J. Case, in his volume, *Jesus, A New Biography,* aim to portray Him as He appeared

[4] Cf. E. F. Scott: "The Limitations of the Historical Method" in *Studies in Early Christianity,* edited by Shirley J. Case, p. 5.

to those who knew Him face to face, with utmost fidelity to His social orientation. According to this view, "the picture in the oldest (Christian) documents is an artist's creation, to be reduced by removing features that owe their presence to the creative impulses of the author and his associates at the moment when the document was written," and "to be supplemented by information wherever the data may be found. . . ." Especially is it necessary to enlarge the author's horizon by a more complete integration of Jesus within the distinctively Jewish setting where He had actually lived.[5] But such a portrait, as the books in question show, is a projection of subjective fancy, quite unlike the presentation of Him given in the Gospels and substantiated by the Church's testimony during the centuries.

II

The second avenue of approach to the Master is also needlessly exclusive and constricted. At the same time it is less concrete

[5] Cf. *Jesus: A New Biography*, p. 6.

than that constituted by the historic documents and the theories attached to their origin and interpretation. It consists of the constantly growing body of testimony to Jesus derived from experience. This testimony is valid in so far as it relates to the transforming effects of faith in Him upon individual and collective life and character. But it transgresses its legitimate boundaries when it is employed either to support or oppose the varying documentary problems and philosophies arising out of our various contacts with Jesus. Supreme within its own realm, experience, as Kant showed once and for always, is secondary beyond it, since it is liable to substitute emotion for reason and fancy for fact. For instance, the application in certain Evangelical schools of the experiential values of the Christian life to such issues as the authorship of the Book of Job, the first chapters of Genesis, or the Fourth Gospel, is unwarranted, prejudicial to reality, and productive of confusion. These and similar questions belong to historical criticism, and cannot be decided by states of feel-

ing, however devout or sincere. The thrusting of pious emotionalism beyond the limits of credibility, in order to prevent the ravages of unbelief, has frequently reacted in the contrary direction.

It is doubtless true that what one has seen and felt may be ultimate for him and for those who feel as he does. Their experience may also be as widely diffused as it is beneficial. But it affords no sufficient basis for a stable religious authority on which to rest the entire Christian apologetic. Its deficiency is manifest in the crude but popular prejudice against an open discussion of faith's essentials. It is disdainful of realities which do not serve its immediate ends. It insists that the unbiased examination of Christian documents and creeds shall either be relinquished as injurious to religion, or that the results of the inquiry shall agree with orthodoxy's prepossessions. To declare that the historical criticism of Holy Scripture, or the doctrines derived therefrom, must be subjected to Christian experience, is scarcely less detrimental for a satisfactory

approach to Jesus than is the neglect of Christian experience by historical criticism. In this, as in all else concerned, what is true is orthodox, and what is false is heterodox.

Moreover, truth consists in relations, hence the quest for it should be coöperative. We shall then find that the religion of Jesus is eternally self-verifying because it is a religion of the spirit, which does not require us to conform to tradition at any cost, nor to crucify intellectual integrity in order to save our soul's beliefs. We cannot have a religion, however, without the Absolute in history. Yet how can we discern the Absolute without the reverent use of those mental processes which apprehend its presence? It is only by observing these fixed principles that the whole field of research can be covered, and made to yield further results to the scholar. In their primary aspects, Christian experience and Christian learning are different but not inconsistent. So far from being at odds, they jointly express life's major realities, and meet in harmony above the din and dust of controversy. Those

who enjoy the privileges of academic training, should be able to judge for themselves the values of sound learning allied with unfeigned faith, and productive of what St. Paul terms "reasonable worship." Certainly no disciple of Jesus need quarrel with conscientious scholarship. Nor can the witness of the Spirit within man form a lasting alliance with the reactionary obscurantism which arbitrarily repudiates the results of scholarship. The reconstruction of the life of our Lord and of His relation to the life of the human family is rather to be achieved by the united efforts of belief and knowledge. Either without the other resembles a boatman rowing in circles because he persists in using one oar instead of two. Here that true catholicity is implicated, which attains that supreme achievement of the heart and mind in unison—a rational faith.

Christian annals do full justice to the paramount consequence of the believing man's experience, while at the same time they rebuke the excesses due to a prostrated emotionalism which zealots mistake for genuine faith.

Patient investigation and dependable evidence had nothing to do with the ecstasy of the good bishop who, standing for the first time on Mount Sinai, solemnly ejaculated: "Now I know that Moses wrote the Pentateuch!" The naïve remark of a prince of the Church on the miracle of the sun standing still, that "there is a sense in which the sun could be said to both move and stand still at the same time," further illustrates the delusions of this lopsided method of interpretation. If clergy of high station commit these offenses, no wonder that many are found in the rank and file less advantaged, who regard their peculiar state of mind as the sole proof of the Holy Spirit's existence as the third person of the Godhead. Herein is also exhibited that total ignorance of the ardent intellectualism exercised in formulating the dogma of the Trinity by those great Cappadocian theologians, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Gregory of Nazianzus and St. Basil of Cæsarea.[6] The evaluation of Jesus is too vital

[6] Cf. "The Evolution of the Doctrine of the Trinity" by E. E. Kirk in *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation,* edited by A. E. J. Rawlinson, p. 159ff.

a proceeding and one too intimately related to the elevation of mankind, to be left to unaided Christian experience. Indispensable as this factor is, it does not furnish an adequate method of approach to the totality of His regnant being.

Some who detect the perils of these narrower devices are confident that the institutional life of the Church can unveil the mystery of Christ's nature. To her and her work in the world they turn for the solution of the problem. Does she not speak with the accents of an authority the duration and weight of which should silence objection? What are the theories of scholars and philosophers, erudite and able though they may be, compared with her undeviating witness to her Lord, in creed, sacrament and practice? Such a position would be far less vulnerable if the Church herself had not submitted to the guidance of enlightened saints and thinkers in the readaptation of her message to the changing enviroments of her career. They revealed an intimate acquaintance with pagan metaphysics and preëxisting

theological systems, and also an intellectual flexibility which rigid orthodoxy had heretofore forbidden. Even the Incarnation process was subjected to repeated theoretical explanations, and the doctrine of our Lord's Person did not assume its present accepted form for many centuries. Indeed, the great St. Thomas Aquinas, patron saint of all Roman Catholic seminaries save those belonging to the Jesuit Order, was conspicuous as a bold and visioned innovator. He soared like an eagle above the level of his fellow Scholastics, and with rare prescience foresaw certain controlling principles of doctrinal formulas and interpretations which are now widely accepted by theologians of different denominations. It was this "Angelic Doctor" who incorporated in the creed of his Church Aristotle's speculation that creation implied previous substances, and therefore was not the making of something out of nothing.[7] Other germinal ideas traceable to Greek

[7] In a recent Neo-scholastic volume, *Cosmology,* by Professor McWilliams of St. Louis University, the author criticizes St. Thomas at this very point. See the note in chapter IV on "The Beginning of the World in Time."

thinkers are found in St. Thomas as well as in the writings of the Fathers and of the schoolmen.

Examples of the originative changes thus effected could be multiplied. But enough have been adduced to show that the advent of Origen, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, St. Thomas, Bradwardine and Calvin, to name but a few pivotal minds of the Patristic, Scholastic and Reformation periods, involved marked transitions in the belief and teaching of the Church. Of all organizations she can least afford to flout her own luminaries, or to forget that they shone in a borrowed light. It would be just as inconsistent for her to profess indifference to the higher sources from which they drew, while appraising to the full their excellence. Not then exclusively in the Church nor in the chosen remnant who charted her course during critical epochs, shall we discern the fuller significance of our Lord's Person.

The bypath of ecclesiastical authority offers strong inducements to those who are averse to the more arduous ways of constant and careful

examination. Many Protestants exhibit a decided preference for dogmatic pronouncements, and are disposed to asperse the rights of the mind in matters of faith. Yet the purer Christianity which Protestantism professes to represent sprang from the exercise of those rights. It vindicated every believer's priesthood and his consequent freedom of approach to God. Liberty of conscience and of inquiry are of the essence of the Reformed Churches. Surely they cannot have it both ways, nor abrogate in the conclusion what they strenuously maintain in the premises.

The Christian Ecclesia of the first two centuries authorized no system of creedal belief, with the exception of the Baptismal formula and its elaborations.[8] Yet in his *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,* Cardinal Newman contends that the dogmas Protestantism renounced as superfluous were in reality the latest forms of ideas which, though not found in Holy Scripture, were nevertheless incipient in its authors and in their readers.

[8] Cf. Adolph Harnack: *History of Dogma,* Vol. II, p. 20ff.

This, he adds, was a salutary provision, since Christianity, as a universal religion, intended for all ages and all peoples, was bound to adapt itself to its mutable surroundings or cease to be. Its teachings were thus made capable of infinite applications harmonizing with the social demands upon them.

The straitest Protestantism has not been exempt from this law of change and adaptation. The duty of public worship, the substitution of the Lord's Day for the Sabbath of Israel, the rite of Infant Baptism, and the affirmation that the Bible is the religion of Protestantism, have little if any prominence in the New Testament. They were not directly due to the letter or sanction of the Sacred Oracles, but to the silent growth of ideas fostered by prolonged Christian consciousness. Other questions, broached but not settled in Holy Scripture, were so real and imperative that they had to be met by permissible developments of the substance of Revelation. So much was this the case that it is impossible to escape the conclusion that post-Biblical evolu-

tions of the teaching of Christianity are within the scope of its Divine Author's providential purpose. The presence of need and supply in Nature offers convincing proof of design in material creation. In like manner, the breaches in the structure of the original creed of the Church made it probable that those growths which developed out of the truths surrounding that creed were intended to fill up its fissures.[9]

So argued the most gifted advocate, since Bossuet, of ecclesiastical authority and tradition as the media of approach to Christ. In summary, Newman contended that the Apostolic Church received the living seed of truth and the living nucleus of a coherent system of belief; to be developed by its own potentialities reacting upon society, beneath the direction of the Spirit of the Living God.[10] So far the Cardinal enlists consent; he was an evolutionist before Darwin appeared upon the scene, a pragmatist prior to Pragmatism. When, however, he endeavored to relate New Testa-

[9] Cf. Alfred Loisy: *The Gospel and the Church*, p. 180ff.

[10] Cf. the Author's *The Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, p. 553ff.

ment teaching and Catholic doctrines as the root and the branches of the one tree, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, his touch was not so sure. Disturbing elements of human error, frailty and misguidance interfered with the smooth operation of his striking theory. It could not stand alone. For Newman the answer to the query how Christian Communions equally confident of their Apostolic descent, yet separated from one another, were to be reconciled, was in an infallible authority. This relieves the situation for Catholics and Protestants alike who identify religious life with its doctrinal expressions. There is no *via media* between an inerrant Church for the preservation of an inerrant dogmatic system, and the candid discussion of the dogma or of whatever it implicates.

Auguste Sabatier enforces the foregoing statement in his two works: *Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion* and *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit.* He nevertheless comments that those who do not agree with the assumption on which the theory

of infallibilism is based are not concerned for its sequences. But once the premise of an inerrant deposit of sacred truth is conceded, its inerrant interpretation is necessitated. All believers gratefully own the inexpressible service of the witness of the Church to the reality of Jesus and His Gospel. Yet that service is not so final as to forbid any who would seek further light upon their Faith's present and future prospects. Nor does it bind every motion of their minds in slavish subjection to the past. The touchstone between the true and the false, the essential and the incidental in morals and religion, is not the sole right and property of tradition, nor of the Fathers, nor even of the Scriptures. Objective authority goes behind these to its original source in Christ Himself. In the words of Bishop Lightfoot of Durham: "The center of Christian Faith is neither a creed nor a book, but a Person and a Life."

The spiritual administration of that authority is not a fixture in chronology nor a decree of antiquity. It is the Voice and Spirit of the

Eternal speaking through all His diversified activities, and inseparable from the conscience of men and women. Our sense of its supremacy signifies the discernment of something higher than we are, making an imperious claim upon us. Though it mingles with our consciousness and is manifested through its intimations, it transcends our personality. We cannot interpret this sentiment within our personal limits, because it carries us resistlessly on to the recognition of Another than ourselves, even One who has moral affinity with us, but who is above and beyond us. "We encounter this Objective Authority without quitting our own being. The sanctities He enforces are not contingent on our consent. They are embedded in the eternal realities of righteousness. They hold their quality wherever found, and the revelation of their dominion for one mind is valid for all." [11]

It is apparent that any one method of approach to Jesus, when employed singly,

[11] Cf. James Martineau's *Life and Letters*. Vol. II, p. 410, and his *Essays and Reviews*, Vol. I, p. 248.

prevents a full apprehension of Him. It should not be less apparent that taken together they converge to a full-orbed view of his marvelous Being and its manifold significance. The Traditionalist, as we have seen, nullifies the operation of the Spirit of God in post-Biblical eras, and confuses stagnancy with stability. The Apocalyptist assumes that Jesus was victimized by His dream of a millennial intervention, but since this view mistakes catastrophe for completion, it does not explain the stupendous hold of Jesus upon man's subsequent faith and devotion. The Ethicist heartily magnifies His claims, yet he not only denies in Him the quality of character essential for their source and range of influence, but also places moral standards above the spiritual dynamic of which they are a derivative. The Skeptic submits his doubts to the dominion of an imagination impervious to the evidences of history. The Psychologist too often indulges a subjectivism scornful of objective realities. He commences by heavily discounting the sacred documents themselves, yet proceeds to

discover the actual mind of the Master in their discredited pages—a method reminiscent of the rustic who severed from a tall tree the limb on which he himself was perched. The Experimentalist confines the infinite ways of God toward man within his own emotional states. The Authoritarian, whose hope is in an unwavering ecclesiastical uniformity, requires that our acquiescence shall be conditioned by our acceptance of its dogmatic deliverances.

III

There is virtue in them all and they can be blended into an effective whole. The original documents reciprocate with the experiential life and institutional agencies of Christianity. Each sustains and supplements the other, safeguarding them from the abuses generated by isolation and overemphasis. Individualists obsessed by the original literature about Jesus, yet immune to the mass of experience which responds to His Incarnation of God's life in the world, are deficient in historical consciousness. The deficiency can be removed by a more

comprehensive background for their faith. The Christ of St. Chrysostom, St. Francis, St. Theresa, St. Bernard; of John Bunyan, John Wesley, General Booth, Phillips Brooks, Dwight L. Moody, and Cardinal Mercier is or should be as real to a vital Christian consciousness as the Jesus of the Gospels, the "Word made flesh" of St. John, the Crucified and Risen Lord of St. Paul; and as much a datum for theological reflection as for religious nourishment. Again, there are scholars who assert the utmost freedom of speculation for themselves in their treatment of the original Evangel, and for their attempts to reconstruct what they claim is the true portrait of Jesus. Yet wisdom's impartiality forsakes them when they forbid a similar freedom to those who invoke for their better understanding of Him, not only the New Testament documents, but His entire course in the past as guaranteed by the Church and by the testimony of her children. Lawful liberty is the Christian heritage and prerogative. But however warmly eulogized, it has no jurisdiction in those exposi-

tions of Jesus, which reject the account of His royal progress through nineteen stirring centuries.

On the other hand, ethereal Christological theories concerning the limitless relationships of Jesus to Deity and the cosmos should be articulated with historical and objective facts. Professor H. R. Mackintosh clearly points out that "there will always be metaphysic in Christology, but it ought to be a metaphysic of the conscience, in which not substance but Holy Love is supreme." He further says: "It does not seem possible to hold or vindicate the absoluteness of Christ as an intelligent conviction except by passing definitely into the domain of reasoned theory." [12] Neglect of these weighty advices has brought a scathing challenge on many well-meant utterances, not because they were untrue, but because they leaned toward the purely conjectural. We must not forget, however, that Divine mysteries necessitating spiritual discernment are at stake, and that there is in man a general reason

[12] *The Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, p. 472ff.

which takes a higher range than severely logical and scientific reason. Truths can be felt and can also be proved, for we know them not only by the reason, but by the intuitive sense which may be called the heart.[13] Hence Sacerdotalism, Sacramentarianism, Bibliolatry, and other *latreia,* or worship, are valuable channels for receiving and transmitting the manifold grace of God in Christ Jesus.

It is futile to urge, for instance, that the massive intellect and profound spirituality of the late Baron von Hügel were dedicated to the holiest of enterprises by means of sacramental efficacy alone. His *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion,* his book on *Eternal Life,* and his striking biography of *Catherine of Siena* indicate the diversified sources of his light and knowledge. Truly Christ is mediated to such rich and communicating spirits in ways other than the Eucharist, which was nevertheless for the Baron the Eternal Offering. Anglo-Catholics

[13] Cf. Boutroux's last chapter in his *Science and Religion in Contemporary Philosophy.*

also obtain from it the Divine help which they convey to the distressed, the poor and the lowly. Their social passion for the unprivileged should teach Evangelicals who cannot accept their doctrine of the Mass that our Anglo-Catholic brethren are one with their Lord in His warfare against sin and suffering. Yet the same admirable traits distinguish the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army, which are non-sacramentarian organizations. Wherever the tokens of fellowship with Jesus appear, there certain validating results follow. It should be our aim to find in each approach to Him the agreements rather than the differences of believers. They assuredly share one life in their common Lord. Theirs is one struggle and one victory, and they are all members of the one Spiritual Body of which He is the Living Head.

## Chapter III

# THE CHRIST OF A GROWING EXPERIENCE

In the preceding chapter I endeavored to show that an adequate realization of the person and mission of Jesus could only be obtained by the inclusive use of all material available for the purpose. As already noted, this material is derived from the written records, the experiential contacts with the Master extending through nineteen centuries, and the organic life and activity of the Christian Church during those centuries. Some criticisms and comments were offered concerning previous attempts of scholars and thinkers to discover the fuller significance of Jesus by means of the exclusive use of any one of these sources of evidence. Reference was made to the synthetic method which construes and harmonizes all of them to that end. It is pertinent to add that the investigator of our Lord's character and

career also needs the impartiality of the historian, the integrity of the scientist, the insight of the philosopher, and the fervor of the religionist.

To assert with Canon Quick, for example, that Christianity is essentially a sacramental religion, and at the same time, to concede, as he does, that there is no clear historical evidence that Jesus instituted the Eucharist, is an instance of the failure to establish a true correlation between the expanding life of the Church and the documents which portray her actual beginnings.[1] We cannot interpret Christian ideas solely in the terms of their ancestry, without doing violence to the larger meanings those ideas acquire from the mystery cults and pagan rites of the earlier Christian eras. On the other hand, we should guard against a common temptation of students of history to conclude that there was an intentional borrowing from those cults and rites because of their occasional coincidence with Christian language and ritual. To be frank,

[1] *The Christian Sacraments*, p. 188ff.

Christianity never assumed unique originality in all respects. "The glory of Christianity," said Doctor Benjamin Jowett of Balliol, "is not to be as unlike other religions as possible, but to be their perfection and their judgment." In this respect it claims to satisfy the eager desires and aspirations of man by means of an Evangel, which gives him the consciousness of conquest over self and an accordance with the Infinite not found elsewhere.

These primal values are not recognized, as they should be, by Bruce Barton in his widely read volume, *The Man Nobody Knows.* Its arresting title is scarcely justified in view of the testimony of the Gospels, and of countless souls who in every subsequent age have confessed their indebtedness to Jesus as their Savior and Lord. Nor does Mr. Barton's delineation of the Master accord with the conception of the Evangelists and Apostles of the New Testament. However sympathetic may be his presentation of Jesus as a man of affairs, a typical captain of industry and trade, shrewd and adroit in His social manipulations, possess-

ing resilient physical strength, and a consummate acquaintance with human nature, this curiously mundane figure is a stranger to those who have rightly appraised the portrayals of New Testament literature. Certainly Mr. Barton has not introduced us to the stainless Being of redemptive passion, through whose manifestation believers have in many places and times found peace with God, with themselves and with their fellows.

Artists, to say nothing of theologians, instinctively antagonize a portraiture which makes that Being subservient to the tumult of the market place and the standards of its devotees. This book of the hour sets Christ's sublime personality in typical American sceneries, at the antipodes from those in which He moved and achieved His triumph of sacrificial love and reconciliation. Written for that somewhat delusive creature "the man of the street," the graphic story in question does not do credit to its author's undoubted reverence for Jesus. It belongs to the perishable writings of which the present age is prolific, and

toward which the future will be utterly indifferent. In its pages mysticism and spiritual sensibility are as ill fated as was the dove Noah sent out of the ark over the inhospitable waters of the Deluge. Imaginative descriptions are here employed for perishable affairs, to the obscuration of the eternal realities at stake. In saying this one does not forget that every period must write its own books. Nor is it of any use for pedants and pundits to affirm, with pontifical ardor, that contemporary bookmakers are pigmies in comparison with the past masters of literature. The reading public of any era will not be bullied into reading those authors who have reached the dignity of classics, sacred or secular. Nevertheless, modern attempts to bring Jesus into the regions of ordinary life must be made in an extraordinary way, and evince some traces of that transcendent temper which first launched Him upon the world. This achievement is not within Mr. Barton's *metier,* and its absence makes what he writes ephemeral.

Renan's *Vie de Jesus* belongs to a very dif-

ferent order. It is a genuinely artistic production, quite superior to Canon Liddon's sweeping stricture that Renan portrayed Jesus as "a lewd Frenchman of the lesser sort." [3] It has a haunting felicity of style and beauty of allusion, a charm of reference and an exalted humanitarian tone, which often leave emotion in the heart and music in the memory. Yet its fatal drawback is that when the devout look beneath this elaborate vesture of rhetoric and learning, the Lord they adore is not there. They search in vain for the Christ of their actual fellowship. He is absent from the stately edifice the French *savant* so skillfully built.

Nor is it possible to give unqualified assent to so manifestly sincere an effort as that of J. Middleton Murry's volume on *Jesus, Man of Genius.* Such He assuredly was because He was infinitely more, but the "more" is not present, nor even hinted by this eminent authority on English letters. While cheerfully

[3] *The Divinity of our Lord*: (Bampton Lectures) p. 15; also compare Note A, section 5.

conceding certain privileges to literary scholarship, despite loud protests against its intellectual refinements and cultural precisions, it is hardly possible to admit Mr. Murry's plea that his "training as a literary writer might be the equivalent of the more specialised training of the professor of divinity." [3] By the same token the law could be placed at the mercy of earnest amateurs, and the healing sciences practiced by enthusiasts ignorant of their technique. It may be recalled that Matthew Arnold made trenchant use of a suggestion akin to Mr. Murry's in *Literature and Dogma.* But its author wandered far afield from the theological problems he essayed to solve.

Believing souls definitely revolt against Mr. Murry's bald assertion that Jesus sought baptism by His forerunner John because He was "conscious of sin." The qualifying clause immediately follows that "these sins were the sins of a man of supreme spiritual genius, who knew and taught that the outward act was

[3] *Jesus, Man of Genius,* p. viii. Cf. his volume, *Things to Come,* p. 99ff.

less significant than the inward attitude"; and that the sins involved consisted essentially in a spirit of doubt and despair.[4] Since when, however, were geniuses exempt from the moral law? And at what moment in His most crucial circumstances did Jesus exhibit either doubt or despair which was morally blameworthy? Surely He had but to know the Will of the Father to accept and fulfill it. Moreover, the notion that we exalt our Lord by attributing minor imperfections to His character is fundamentally false to the New Testament record of that character. It presupposes what experience verifies: that sinful humanity, aware of its frailty and helplessness, has always found its enablement in the Divine Daysman who was without spot or blame. To rob men of this confidence, and to do it at the behest of a purely theoretical process, is to render the race a depressing disservice.

We are indebted to Doctor Gamaliel Bradford for a series of illuminating biographies, the latest of which, *Life and I,* is characterized

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 8f.

by him as "an autobiography of humanity." He rightly regards Jesus as the central influence of religion. "Among all the varied agencies for disciplining the mutinous, rebellious, all-engrossing I, none probably has been more notable or more efficient than the life and teaching of Jesus." But this "critical outsider," as the author styles himself, evinces a serious misunderstanding of the spirit and purpose of the Master. He enlarges upon His "perpetual diatribe against riches," which implies "a good deal of ignorance of actual conditions, and, if one dares to suggest it, even a trifle of jealousy, perhaps not for oneself, but for those whom one represents." If the havoc riches have wrought in the social order does not convince Mr. Bradford that Jesus was justified in pointing out their inherent perils, perhaps a reminder of the seamy side of that order, or in the circles vitiated by Mammonism, might do so. Moreover, our Lord's animadversions were directed against that lust for wealth which is the admitted source of multitudinous evils, rather than against wealth

*per se.* Again, it is a clear misreading of the New Testament to assert that "the interest of beauty, of æsthetic emotion, and of intellectual curiosity, of the abstract passion for the truth," does not exist in its pages. To one who has recently returned from wandering through the European art galleries this sounds rather far-fetched. Provided Mr. Bradford's criticism is correct, one wonders whence the celebrities of mediæval and renaissance religious art received their subjects and their inspiration, if not from the Gospels and Epistles. The idyll of the Nativity alone, as idealized by them, flatly contradicts Mr. Bradford's superficial reflections on "beauty" and "æsthetic emotion." Still, these are not so surprising in the light of his admission that he has "not read a chapter of the Bible continuously for over ten years," nor "the Gospels as a whole for a great many more years than ten." [5] Such candid confession of unconcern is naïve, to say the least. But on what does this author base his right to instruct others concerning so paramount an

[5] Cf. *Life and I*, p. 155f.; 172ff.

issue if he has omitted a rereading of the original sources? It is precisely this indirect, second-hand approach to Jesus, which accounts in great measure for the misapprehensions and erroneous estimates of Him and of His relation to mankind, which hamper the progress of knowledge. It is trite to observe that experts in one realm may be and frequently are bunglers in another. Eminent in a given department of inquiry, they seem impotent beyond it, and carry over from it prepossessions and methods which either stultify research or blind its makers to realities they should consider.

These observations apply to *The Son of Man,* by Emil Ludwig, another biographer of deserved reputation. His preface states that "one who would venture to ascribe to Jesus imaginary sayings and doings should be a person at least equal to Jesus in intuitive power." Yet this discriminating condition is discarded by Herr Ludwig when he comes into closer touch with his theme. While he is occupied with the backgrounds of Palestinian life and

manners, or the doctrines and customs of the Orient, he displays the fecundity of ideas and constructive force we have been taught to anticipate from his previous works upon the Ex-Emperor William, Prince Bismarck and Napoleon the First. But the soul of Jesus is entirely beyond his apprehension. To cover the hiatus in his interpretation, he indulges in melodramatic assertions and romantic conjectures, indicative of preconceptions entirely foreign to the Master's nature and utterances. The biting words "hectoring," "fanatical," "overbearing," and "arrogant," applied to Jesus as the creator of the then novel virtue of humility, reveal Ludwig's petulance rather than his biographical discernment. It is nothing short of the perversion of the records, and shows an astonishing lack of critical insight to insist that Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man" in the earlier period of His ministry, and "the Son of God" in its later period. In brief, the psychological bias prevalent in Ludwig's writings here makes him gullible of fancies and disdainful of facts. Not a few of his supposi-

tions are too flimsy to be regarded seriously, and they are of such a kind as would pass unnoticed but for the name attached to them. One lays aside his book with the feeling that if this is the best evaluation of Jesus that can be made by one of the leading analytical biographers of the age, St. Paul's verdict that the world by wisdom knows not God is reaffirmed.

An error common to certain historical writers is to follow the line of reasoning, *post hoc ergo propter hoc.* This fallacy obtains in *The Paganism in our Christianity* by Arthur Weigall. He quotes as analogies to the Virgin Birth heathen legends of the union of gods with the daughters of men, but fails to note that these ceased to be virgins after their union. His assertion that the phrase "the blood of bulls" in the Epistle to the Hebrews is due to the influence of Mithraism grievously overlooks the Levitical ritual of the Old Testament. The Church absorbed some things from the pagan mysteries, but they were subordinate to the truth of her Lord's Person. "Those

who tell us what Christianity took over, whether from Hebrew religion, Greek philosophy, Stoicism or the pagan cults, too often forget to tell us what it refused and rejected. Yet in that process of assimilation and rejection is the proof of the living organism."[6] These words of a competent authority on comparative religion establish a test which many are inclined to overlook. A fatal misconception of the Jesus of history is seen in Mr. Weigall's ingenious reading of the Gospel story in the light of myths and legends. It is not surprising that he revives the swoon hypothesis of Paulus, prevalent among the earlier rationalists, that Jesus did not die on the cross but only suffered a temporary lapse of consciousness. To accept such a theory is to discountenance the clear testimony of the Evangelists that Jesus was actually dead. Indeed, it would have been nothing short of a miracle if a ghastly and exhausted Figure had induced the disciples to believe that He was alive with power. It might be said of Mr.

[6] Kenneth Saunders: *The Gospel for Asia,* p. 182.

Weigall's theories that "what is new is not true and what is true is not new." No explanation that fails to give full credit to Jesus for the spiritual impulse which He inaugurated and advanced has yet been found satisfactory. What is propounded in this book is akin to a theory of music offered by a deaf mute.

Nevertheless, the suspicions of critical scholarship to which allusion has been made receive some countenance in certain theological coteries. An accomplished writer of this liberal persuasion asserts that "every statement in the records is to be judged by the degree of its suitableness to the distinctive environment of Jesus, on the one hand, and to that of the framers of Gospel tradition at one or another stage in the history of Christianity, on the other." [7] Yet if everything in the sacred narratives which cannot be explained as an echo of its "distinctive environment" is to be regarded as negligible, the whole idea and fact of creative personality is discarded. Who can integrate the second Isaiah's prophetic majesty

[7] Shirley J. Case: *Jesus, A New Biography*, p. 115.

with a harassed band of exiles in Babylonia, or the unequaled poetry of the drama of Job with the provincialism of post-exilic Judaism?

A similar historical obtuseness is seen in Doctor Warschauer's *Historical Life of Christ,* in which he maintains that the Gospels are "records of the Passion extended backwards," and that many elements of a miraculous nature were read into the narratives by His credulous followers, who did not testify to the reality of the events, but to their impressions, actual or otherwise, and mostly the latter. For example, the genealogies were fabricated because of a desire to prove the Davidic descent of Jesus. The accounts of the Nativity reflect current legends about Mithra and Buddha, and were accommodations to the Old Testament's Messianic prophecies. The baptism of the Master embodies the belief of the early church that He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, whereby He became conscious of a mission which He afterwards understood. The betrayal by Judas consisted in his giving away the Messianic secret reserved in the keeping of the

Twelve. The Resurrection story was an apocryphal product of floating traditions due to imagination.[8]

Professor Benjamin W. Bacon rightly points out in *The Story of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Church,* that there could be no Gospel *of* Jesus apart from the Gospel *about* Jesus. They who desire a return to the simple religion of Jesus, "the paternalistic theism of the Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's Prayer," do not realize that the ethics of Jesus cannot be separated from his theology without devitalizing His religion. Indeed, the Gospel of Jesus is in reality the Gospel about Jesus, for the Four Gospels as well as the Pauline and other writings of the New Testament harmoniously convey the apostolic testimony "even as truth is in Jesus." [9] It is here that Professor Bacon's negative criticism undermines the solid construction of the Faith. His very acuteness and resourcefulness lead to many ingenious conclu-

[8] J. Warschauer: *The Historical Life of Christ,* pp. 16ff.; 46; 298; 344ff.

[9] Ephesians iv. 21.

sions, based upon strained combinations, due to the dangerous tendency toward subjectivism, which has wrought so disastrously in the reconstruction of the Gospel narrative. It is simply conjecture to assert that Jesus did not identify Himself with the Suffering Servant of Messianic promise, and that He did not consider that death was the inevitable outcome of the agony in Gethsemane. If Jesus is "the greatest religious Teacher that ever lived," as Doctor Bacon acknowledges, it is incredible that He should have misread the purpose of His mission. It is hardly possible that His disciples showed greater insight, and that especially St. Paul, who was not an original disciple, had a more profound grasp of the religion of Jesus than did Jesus Himself. Such a view runs directly counter to the teaching of the New Testament, which is our final literary authority on the claims of our Lord.

These gratuitous explanations of effects after dismissing their ascribed causes necessitate reasoning within a circle carried to the nth

power. One ventures to submit that it is not within the province even of professional capacity to assign world-shaping events to fond deceits and fantastic legends which were the common property of the proletariat. Marked liberties have been taken with Shakespeare, and an extensive literature dedicated to the denial of his authorship of the plays and sonnets that bear his name. But until now no censor has hinted that their imperial flights should be assigned to the gossip of a rural community, or to the current tittle-tattle of London's taverns and the alleyways of its primitive theaters. Yet such an attribution would be facility itself compared with the task of wholly explaining Jesus by the age and environment in which He lived.

In passing from the forced interpretations of ill-digested knowledge and theoretical speculation to those of real magistrates of divinity, it is as though one left a crowded and noisy room for the mountain side with its unintercepted vision and purer air. The three Anglican bishops, Doctors Headlam, Temple and

Gore, may be classed as conservatives. But theirs is the conservatism of men in whom the historical sense is virile and intelligent. They properly appreciate the tremendous importance of the order, life and energies of the Church. Their outlook is not confined to a solitary era of the past, however momentous. They visualize it as the progenitor of a growing future, the potencies of which make the beginning moment the supreme moment; a future, in which, after the debate is silenced, a few stars of righteousness and truth shine resplendently in man's spiritual firmament, with Jesus as their sun.

Bishop Headlam, who collaborated with the late Professor Sanday in one of the most satisfactory commentaries extant on the Epistle to the Romans, is as fully cognizant of the problems connected with New Testament literature as any living authority. He writes: "To those who deny the historical character of the documents which narrate the life of Christ, we may reply that they give us a coherent and consistent narrative of events; that they contain

the record of a teaching harmonious with the period to which it belongs, unaffected, or but slightly affected, by the development of Christian history; that they present to us a Person whose character and message are unique; and that they form an adequate cause for the events which followed them." [10] In an earlier volume Bishop Headlam stressed the truth that the teaching of Jesus as contained in the Gospels, is not a collection of diversified estimates and opinions held by various individuals during a period of from fifty to seventy years, but a homogeneous whole with conspicuous internal oneness, derived from a Teacher of intense spiritual authority, whose dominance was acknowledged alike by His disciples and adversaries.[11] This is reasoning without rage, critical but cautious, by a divine who exercises restraint and eschews evasion. Its spiritual refinement and acute insight are admirably adapted to the nature of the theme. When the occasion requires, the bishop can forge the

[10] *Jesus Christ in History and Faith*, p. 37f.
[11] *The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ*, p. 314.

anchors of faith as well as define its more delicate issues, and dismiss with appropriate peremptoriness what he calls "learned trifling."

Many entitled to judge esteem Bishop Gore's volume on *Belief in Christ* his *magnum opus.* Others contend, however, that it but reaffirms his previous position taken in earlier days in the volume of essays entitled *Lux Mundi,* and more completely set forth in his Bampton Lectures on *The Incarnation of the Son of God.* Some who are familiar with Bishop Gore's ecclesiastical convictions assert that his maintenance of the Chalcedonian Christology, while consistent with Anglo-Catholicism, disqualifies him as an effective apologist for "the modern mind." Whatever this somewhat intangible mind may happen to be, it is presumable that wisdom was not born with it, nor will it necessarily share its disappearance. Besides, when a Christological conclusion nearly identical with that of Bishop Gore is reached by Archbishop William Temple in his *Christ the Truth* and also by Canon B. H. Streeter in his lucid chapter on "The

Christ" found in his remarkable volume, *Reality,* these three very dissimilar apologists should be heeded. If Bishop Gore favors Biblical and historical methods for the process, Bishop Temple proceeds according to the canons of philosophical inquiry, and Doctor Streeter agrees with both bishops after a fresh and comprehensive survey of all the relevant testimony. This agreement is further strengthened by his more recent essay on "Finality in Religion," contained in the book entitled *Adventure, The Faith of Science and the Science of Faith.* The competence of these Anglican leaders for the task they have discharged is beyond successful dispute. They fortify the conviction that Christianity's received doctrine of its Founder's person is inseparably related with enduring realities, which neither hypothetical criticisms, conjectural explanations, nor undisciplined imagery disguised in scholastic dialect can displace.

Any conception of Jesus which invalidates the historic experience of the Church, and by dispelling her assurance of pardon and peace

to the penitent, invites her dissolution as the worshiping center of His redeemed brotherhood, cannot be viewed with equanimity by those to whom God's honor and man's welfare are alike precious. When the chief argument adduced for this reversal of Christian consciousness is that the historic doctrine of Jesus is "a strain on our credulity," one begs leave to dissent. The strain, if there be any, is in the opposite direction. Since the fullest proof of Christianity is original Christianity itself, much credulity is presumptively demanded by those who lightly ascribe the world's noblest religion to entirely inadequate sources. If we realize, as we should, that none can "explain" life's most ordinary forms, we shall not be confounded by the apostolic declaration that, in Jesus as the Christ, the Eternal entered Time. Professor H. R. Mackintosh appositely observes: "Everywhere in life, in nature, in history, in personality, there are, for each of us, irreducible and enigmatic facts, which we can touch and recognize and register, but of which we never become masters intellectually. Na-

ture itself is full of new beginnings of real increase, of novel fact not deducible from the previous phases of the cosmos. . . . There is an alogical element in things, not to be measured by the canons of discursive mind. . . . Being is too rich and manifold for us to lay down *a priori* regulations to the effect that this or that, even though worthy and morally credible, is impossible for God." [12]

II

How then with all the ascertainable subject matter before us are we to appraise the values which abound in Jesus? The question should be answered before any attempt is made to apply those values to the multiplex needs of our own life. We might begin by urging that He has made an immeasurably larger differential in the world than any other being who has ever lived. This observation trespasses on the obvious, yet it has the initial advantage of a practically universal indorsement in countries enjoying the highest civilization. It may be

[12] *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, p. 471.

further predicated that He is abundantly able to amplify the differential when men shall correspondingly appropriate its meanings. Everywhere to-day the beneficial realities of His mission are acknowledged. Its incalculable good profoundly impresses the general mind, and kindles the eagerness to know more of Jesus, shown by believers and non-believers in the self-manifestation of the Father in Him. The average man or woman pays little heed to scholars, who, while bent on what they deem "the Jesus of history," at the same time ignore the relations He has established between the Creator and His children. It is instinctively felt by the mass that unaided mortals, however erudite, cannot encompass the entire revelation which Jesus made. This would involve nothing less than an inerrant analysis and interpretation of nineteen centuries of Christian history and progress.

Again, students of the past are aware that in its decisive moments those super-personalities have emerged, who possessed a combination of gifts which found its expression in the

guidance of events. The very contradictions of their age expanded their ability to direct its passional forces into new channels. Such a personality was John Wesley, vigorous without vehemence, neither loud nor labored, a fixed luminary of private and public virtue, who shone on the just and the unjust. Annalists long since rejected the idea that Wesley's significance, or that of other kindred spirits, was exclusively religious. Doubtless after his conversion in Aldersgate Street, London, on May the twenty-fourth, 1738, it was his absorbing business to rekindle in English-speaking lands the spiritual fires which sloth, sensuality and unfaith had almost quenched. But, to quote Lecky: "It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the scene which took place in that humble meeting house in Aldersgate Street formed an epoch in English history. The conviction which then flashed upon one of the most powerful and most active intellects . . . is the true source of English Methodism." [18] This verdict is altogether too modest.

[18] *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. III, p. 48.

Neither England nor her Methodism was the sole recipient of Wesley's illumination. His transcendence was diffused among the nations; his words have gone out to the ends of the earth. He would have been the first to assert that no soul shines in its own radiance, or transmits more light than it is able to receive. The strength and extent of his influence but reflect his intimacy with the Light of lights. He found his spiritual lineage and leverage in the Crucified and Risen Jesus. By His aid Wesley proposed to upraise the deserted and shepherdless folk of the period not only to decency but to holiness. It was through the vision of the Christ that he foresaw an apparently hopeless and degenerate populace gathered into an ideal Communion broadly and securely based on love, on justice, on social and religious responsibility.

These passing references to the foremost Protestant statesman-evangelist of the past three hundred years simply emphasize our inability to depict the moral preëminence and spiritual distinction of the Christ of the Græco-

Roman Empire and of subsequent States. Gibbon and later historians show that St. Paul's arraignment of that ancient organization in his letter to the Romans was well within the mark. The marvelous political system which for seven hundred years had governed earth's most habitable provinces with magnanimity, courage, prudence and firmness was then on the verge of collapse. The heart of Rome was decrepit through carnality and corruption. Neither Cicero's ethical writings nor those of Marcus Aurelius or Seneca could avert her impending doom any more than they could redistribute the solar system. Yet while her decline was hastened by lust, luxury, oppression and war, a new life was injected into Roman society by an obscure and despised band of sectaries. It was the life of Christ and the life in Christ. His disciples could not save the venerable political fabric which tottered to its fall almost unaware of their existence. But they did something better. They inaugurated the civilization we inherit, which, notwithstanding its lamentable blunders and

crimes, contains the promise of a universal betterment which was unknown before Christ's appearance, except by prophetic Judaism.

Grant Showerman, in his *Eternal Rome*, objects to that appearance and its results, because, according to him, they destroyed the Roman Empire; an event which he mourns as the bitterest tragedy of time. His antipathy to Christianity probably preceded this astounding discovery. The causes of Imperial Rome's fall were certainly in no way related to the new Faith. On the contrary, they were due to facts, habits and principles which were the antithesis of that Faith. Moreover, to assume that the world's future depended upon the perpetuity of the *Pax Romana* is to show oneself devoid of historical imagination, and unaware of the inevitable outcome of glaring social evils in physical and moral bankruptcy.

The contention of Edward Lucas White, another writer predisposed against Christianity, that Rome's overthrow was brought about by the insidious undermining of the Christians, is virtually a repetition of Gibbon's circuitous

arguments. Mr. White's facts are out of focus when he states that the religion of Jesus stressed thoughts and not deeds, and that its disciples were intolerant fanatics and hypocrites, whose other-worldliness induced them to conspire against the State.[14] Such are the nebulous sentimentalities enlisted to explain a crucified Jew's unique conquest of the best conceived and administered political sovereignty of antiquity. To return to realities, the Cæsars forfeited the world's allegiance because when the gods arrive the half gods depart. Yet this is a strange reason for antagonizing a religion which ushered in what Napoleon himself exalted as the imperishable Kingdom of the spiritualities.

What began in the remote province of Judæa has not stayed its beneficent march. Modern society owes much to Rome and more to Greece. But its essential elements have been conserved and hallowed by the Gospel of Jesus, which was first heralded in the Græco-Roman Empire during its decadence. What

[14] Cf. Edward Lucas White: *Why Rome Fell*, p. 296ff.

happened then has happened since and is happening now. The Christ of a growing experience is not confined to institutional Christianity or to anything it covers. He takes the kingdoms of the earth for His operating stage, and coördinates their peoples and their policies in behalf of His redemptive purpose. Remove from our age what is discernibly there because He lived, loved, taught and died; because men willingly surrender themselves to His will; and what have you left in it of vital consequence? Enter a great library, and set apart the volumes which are in more or less degree motivated by Jesus. Walk through the art galleries and museums of capital cities, and remove from them the masterpieces inspired by Christian sentiment, or portraying Christian events. Stand in the Angel Choir of Lincoln or the transepts of Notre Dame in Paris and consider their adumbrations of eternity; their power to make even the secularized spectator conscious of:

> A presence that disturbs him with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts, a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,

and to hypnotize him, so to speak, into religious feeling. Banish these visible evidences of Christ's great differential, and how bare and desolate life would be![15]

Think of the benevolent Christian influences that have humanized the customs and laws of once barbarous nations. Challenged by the doctrines of the Master, mighty States, prone to license, outrage and persecution, have measurably exterminated these iniquities, and attained civic integrity and honor. The selfish tyrannies of capricious princes were tamed. The fickleness, perversity and cruelty of the populace were modified. The dissoluteness of the aristocracies and the turpitude of the multitudes were lessened. The finer elements of existence were restored to primacy. Conduct was won to better courses. Time ceased to be "a maniac scattering dust, and life a fury flinging flame." On the low dark verge of humanity's horizon the dawn of a new day was visible. These things have not been done in a

[15] Cf. James R. Cameron: *Jesus and Art;* Ernest H. Short: *The House of God.*

corner. The upper room where the first disciples barred the door for fear of their foes has given way to places of public concourse. Christianity has cried aloud in the streets and from the house tops. Its message is to all the sons of men. Its issues are now an open contention, fraught with such matters as the honorable dealings of trade and politics, social reconstruction, national well-being, international concord, the cultivation of righteousness in the entire life and activity of mankind—in a word, the supremacy of Christ's Kingdom in all world affairs.

Troeltsch comments on the extent to which the Calvinistic interpretation of Christianity affected modern society by instilling in the peoples of northern Europe the ideal of "self-devotion to work and gain, production for production's sake as the Will of God for every man." [16] On the other hand, how often and tragically we have been taught that industry and trade, or even knowledge and the cultural

[16] Cf. R. S. Sleigh: *The Sufficiency of Christianity*, an exposition of the religious philosophy of Dr. Ernst Troeltsch, p. 159ff.

arts rub elbows with disaster when separated from Christ's control, and subjected to the discords of hate or the anarchy of physical violence.

Allow me to commend in this connection Charles Loring Brace's *Gesta Christi.* Few authors have more succinctly described the peaceful interpretations of Christianity in human progress. Ideas, principles, practices now looked upon as the alphabet of ethics, have either been implanted or stimulated and sustained by the religion of Jesus. Among these are "regard for the personality of the weakest and poorest; respect for woman; the absolute duty of each member of the fortunate classes to raise up the unfortunate; humanity to the child, the prisoner, the stranger, the needy, and even the brute; unceasing opposition to all forms of cruelty, oppression and slavery; the duty of personal purity and the sacredness of marriage; the necessity of temperance; the obligation of a more equitable division of the profits of labor, and of greater coöperation between employers and employed; the right of

every human being to have the utmost opportunity of developing his faculties, and of all persons to enjoy equal political and social privileges; the principle that the injury of one nation is the injury of all, and the expediency and duty of unrestricted trade and intercourse between all countries; and finally and principally, a profound opposition to war, a determination to limit its evils when existing, and to prevent its arising by means of international arbitration." [17] The reading of this list of actual achievements is a reminder that, although Jesus has not yet been accepted with consistent seriousness by his Church, it cannot be said that His will has been wholly disregarded. Nevertheless a wide gulf still yawns between the theory and the practice of organized religion. Christ's followers everywhere should therefore hasten to bridge that gulf by a more unreserved consecration to His teachings, in order that God's Kingdom might come with power to earth's remotest bounds.

[17] C. Loring Brace: *Gesta Christi, A History of Humane Progress under Christianity,* p. xii.

## Chapter IV

# THE CHRIST IN THE MODERN WORLD

In his *History of Doctrine,* Professor Hagenbach makes a five-fold division of the course pursued by Christian thought from its beginning. First in order was "The Age of Apologetics," when the infant Ecclesia was chiefly concerned for the defense of the Faith against its Pagan opponents. Next came "The Age of Polemics," during which the Church established by the Emperor Constantine's edict devoted herself to the formulation of her doctrines. "The Age of Systematic Theology" which largely influenced the modern period followed that of "Polemics" and deserves more than casual mention. It was developed by the keen and logical cogitations of the Schoolmen, whose theological reign extended from the ninth to the end of the fifteenth century. They

made a praiseworthy attempt to reconcile the dogmas of faith with the dictates of reason: setting up an all-inclusive system on the supposition that the creed of the Church was the one reality capable of rationalization. As the product of Christian intellectualism, Scholasticism acted under the Aristotelian method, and was governed by the assumption that all phenomena must be understood from and toward theology. The early Fathers had bequeathed their successors a closely articulated, comprehensive body of dogma, and a philosophical apparatus which determined and shaped its content. Once the Schoolmen realized the nature of this bequest, they endeavored to recover the spirit of inquiry that lay behind its results. The Church consequently entered almost automatically upon another era of strain and conflict, intensified by the previous organization and concurrent growth of the Papacy, which had reinforced the predicates of catholicity, authority and dogma, and the paramountcy of their spiritual claims.

Although St. Augustine's influence was regnant in Scholasticism, Erigena, one of its first representatives, was a Neo-Platonist and a Mystic rather than a typical Schoolman. Roscelinus, Anselm, William of Champeaux, and his pupil Abelard belong to its first period, which terminated with the twelfth century. The prominent figures of the second period were Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. In so far as the term science is applicable to their meditations, for them and their disciples it consisted almost exclusively of divinity. Doubtless they reasoned in a circle, since they set out on their quest with inherited convictions they were determined to substantiate. Many of their arguments may seem frivolous and barren to Modernists, who accuse them of fabricating absurd problems and wasting endless pains upon their solution. Yet jibes are meaningless when flung at able and dedicated men, who gave practical proof of their unsurpassed eagerness in thinking, and exhibited an intrepid energy in subjecting to thought what-

ever they deemed essential to its dominion. Nor should it be forgotten that the Schoolmen were also the Modernists of their age: bold and advanced spirits whose work could not be canceled without a break in the continuity of Christian thinking and achievement. Our political, ethical and religious ideas and institutions have been constructed in part out of the material these mediæval quarrymen excavated with prodigious toil. If its results were not effective in enriching knowledge, they certainly strengthened the reasoning faculties of the future, and prepared them for their arduous tasks. In summary, the mission of the Scholastics expanded and invigorated the human mind until the limitless realms of the natural sciences were opened to its researches. When that mission ended, it was succeeded by the Renaissance which ushered in the freedom and the methods of organized knowledge.

"The Age of Conflict and Confessions" covered the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its developments show that Protestantism was at odds not only with the Roman

See, but within itself; and the severity of its internal separations is evidenced by Schaff's third volume on *The Creeds of Christendom.* In Hagenbach's scheme, "The Age of Criticism" comes last. It began in the latter half of the eighteenth century and persists to the present. The advance, on the one hand, of the natural sciences, and on the other, of historical and Biblical criticism, dismayed theological orthodoxy, jealous as it was for the preservation of those doctrinal formulas which now seemed to be threatened with dissolution.

Here the poets enter the scene. They are usually the best interpreters of their age; alive alike to its hopes and fears, and sensitive to those subtler movements of the Time Spirit, which so often escape the notice of partisans. Arthur Hugh Clough gave up the whole problem of faith's reconciliation with knowledge, yet still clung to faith in blank bewilderment, and affirmed, "Christ is not dead." Tennyson ultimately succeeded in reaching a stage where faith was the one "beam in darkness," which we must "let grow." Browning's optimism,

so often lauded, was at times too insistent to be convincing. Matthew Arnold may be described as "faint, yet pursuing." At his critical hour he was dejectedly

> Wandering between two worlds,
> One dead, the other powerless to be born.

He distilled through his compositions a stoical resignation and a tranquil reserve prepared to endure the worst. Many inquired with Clough:

> Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
> Far, far ahead, is all her seamen know.
> And where the land she travels from? Away,
> Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

Arnold echoes this refined and pensive pessimism:

> The world, which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain:
> And we are here as on a darkling plain
> Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
> Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Here is doubt deeply tinged with its native melancholy: the utterance of cultured spirits

who are reluctant to leave their former habitations, and gaze back on them with infinite desire and infinite regard. From such mingled elements the most intimate strains are evoked. They have no message for the popular mind. Yet so long as we cherish classic forms committed to elevated and candid reflections on pregnant themes, we shall read Arnold's "Resignation," "Dover Beach," and "Thyrsis." Though the inevitable word was not always at his command, his poetry plumbs spiritual depths which the best prose has seldom sounded.

Out of the heart of this "Age of Criticism" came Tennyson's "In Memoriam," published when the conflict between belief and unbelief raged at its height. That saint, mystic and scholar, the late Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, then a Cambridge Professor, gratefully acknowledged the service rendered by the poem. Its one hundred and twenty-fourth section caused many intelligent people to feel with Westcott that the long meditated work had in it the "inalienable minimum of faith which

humanity cannot surrender because it is necessary to life." It reads in part:

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
I heard a voice, "Believe no more,"
And heard an ever breaking shore
That tumbled in the Godless deep.

A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answer'd, "I have felt."

No, like a child in doubt and fear;
But that blind clamor made me wise;
Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near;

And what I am beheld again
What is, and no man understands;
And out of darkness came the hands
Which reach thro' nature, moulding men.

Thus the Laureate found for himself and for multitudes besides that "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love," without whom the world was drear indeed, but with whom its darkest phases shone in a new and a transforming light.[1]

[1] Cf. Gaius Glenn Atkins: *Reinspecting Victorian Religion*, p. 67ff.

II

It may be asked if we are still in Hagenbach's "Age of Criticism." So far as the essentials of Christianity are concerned, the answer is that criticism is on the wane, and that what may be called "The Age of Reconstruction and Restatement" is at hand. This does not mean, however, that criticism is listless and silent. On the contrary, it is energetic and vocal. But it concentrates in the main upon the failure of institutional Christianity to fulfill the fundamental ideals and aims of the New Testament Faith. Seldom indeed has any era experienced a profounder or a more widespread conviction of the significance of Jesus than our era is now experiencing. The conviction that individual, social, national and international safety and welfare are bound up in whole hearted allegiance to His example and teaching exists to-day on an unprecedented scale. If He cannot redeem humanity from its fevered ways and useless restlessness, its sin and degradation, then, for the majority, its evils are plainly beyond redemption. We

are told that science has to be correlated with religion; that those facts which bear upon the theory of the nature of things must be rediscovered and restated before the claims of any religion can have concrete meaning. We are further told that, provided the result of this process is favorable to religion, it must include the service of science, and be subjected to such interpretations as science permits. It is also asserted that we have to look to an inductive philosophy, based upon scientific phenomena, for a solution of the problems of faith, and that when this philosophy and its implications are completed, we shall be able to offer men a religion, the ethical and inspirational qualities of which surpass anything that conventional religion now offers.[2]

This emancipating program is as yet inchoate. But it can be predicted that unless it is to prove futile, it will have to acknowledge

[2] Cf. Henry Nelson Wieman, *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*. Doctor Wieman accepts as in every way adequate and justifiable Professor Whitehead's conception of God as "that arrangement of all being which makes for concretion, but which is never completely actualized here. But God is increasingly actualized throughout an infinite progression," p. 196f.

that while the living universe is a compacted whole, Jesus is for our race the center of its cosmic unity. The truly Divine element of His nature is not to be found in the purity of His moral precepts, nor even in the uniqueness of His character, but in the glorious lucidity which the great Ideal He embodied attained in His own soul. This Ideal of absolute accord with Deity also implied that all which is finite requires a higher mediation than man or anything man achieves can bestow; and that for him true life is only to be found in a mediative personality. The relation of Christianity to science or philosophy is therefore neither one of dependence nor of opposition, but of distinction of function. Each is entitled to its own freedom; each contributes toward an ultimate harmony. Christianity is supreme in its own realm because it makes possible an ineffable fellowship between the Creator and the creature.

This reasoning transfers the things of the Spirit from metaphysics to psychology, and bases their authority upon the attested experi-

ences of believers. Neither scientific nor any other outward standards can domineer over the soul in which the Divine Mercy records its decrees of pardon and reconciliation. Christians are therefore delivered from fear of the changes attending the expansion of knowledge. They do not have to rely upon those apologetic methods, which, though they may arrest doubt, fail to set forth the plenitude of God's grace and truth as these are revealed in Christ Jesus. Accurately estimated, Christian theology is not speculative; it is expressive. Its substance consists, as Schleiermacher asserts, of the facts of Christian consciousness, and its mission is to enumerate and interpret these facts without undue subserviency to the problems of philosophy or the discoveries of physical science. In the words of Professor H. R. Mackintosh: "The trust that Chirst is final can no more than the trust that He is real be produced by theoretical and constraining argument; we name Him absolute because in experience we recognize Him as the ultimate

Divine answer to man's individual and social needs." [3]

To put it bluntly, the world with which Jesus identified Himself cannot miss its appointed destiny. He will always be its lodestar; and though it may wander far, in the long last it will return to Him as the nexus of its attachment to God. Enough has been submitted here and in the previous chapters to make plain the primary significance of Jesus in the realm of religion, as thus understood. What He said and what He did have endless worth for every intelligent being. One is aware that sin also has its social ramifications, but its tragedies begin and end in the individual. It projects in the sinner a malefic disturbance which severs him from his higher self, his proper environment, and his Maker. The final rationale for any universal religion will be that this disturbance is abolished and its ravages healed. Man is intended for God's ownership, apart from which he cannot be truly

[3] *The Originality of the Christian Message*, p. 187f.

man. Jesus incarnated that ownership. It was His meat and drink to do the Father's Will, and He declared He could do nothing save that which the Father commanded. He furthermore manifested the very selfhood of Deity to us, and enabled us to see ourselves as He sees us. Herein is the organic law and the living source of an ideal Divine-human relationship, made actual in steadfast trust, loyal obedience, and loving fellowship. Nor can it be seriously questioned that if every human being bore himself toward God as Jesus did, and as He invites all men to do, a regenerating transformation would ensue.

If there is any distinguishing trait in modern civilization, it is the realization that no soul lives to itself. For this reason a religion concerned with nothing more than the salvation of the individual cannot win the interest, much less the reverent adherence of mankind. If, as regards Christianity, this is "The Age of Reconstruction," it must respond to the social compunction which has retrieved the credit of

our day. And why not? The genius of the Gospel lends itself to social betterment with singular power and fitness. Its capacity in this respect makes one wonder how institutional Christianity could waste so many centuries in comparative idleness or indifference, while the field, which is the world of human aspiration, labor, suffering and wrong, awaited its latent energies. To be sure, the vision of the stream of tears and blood, ever falling darkly through the shadows of mortal travail, appeared to *illuminati* like St. Francis and other mediæval leaders. But the social viewpoint was heavily befogged by that sense of individualistic importance which still disfigures some religious propaganda. It has its rights, but their exaggeration usurps the free play of Christian humanitarianism, and reduces the Evangel to a scheme for personal rescue rather than for social restoration. So we take for granted the social force and meaning of that Gospel, and contend that if its Lord does not reign in industrial and international affairs, He cannot reign at all.

III

It was Immanuel Kant who taught our age its doctrine of human personality. Two of his controlling principles were that God had set before Himself a "Kingdom of ends"; and that because humanity is the center of all real values, we should treat it, whether in one's person or that of another, as an end and never as a means. Hence the cosmic goal is at once social and moral, nor can there be any sufficient ethic which does not include both these elements. Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism, did much in his sociological system to give Kant's concepts an organized form. He proposed an inductive study of human society based on its definite and ascertainable ways of action. For him these ways resembled those of other natural phenomena, and their specific laws were legitimate matters for observation and classification. Long before his death in 1857, however, Comte also endeavored to satisfy man's religious requirements by demanding a real object for them and real relations between the object and man. This object

he termed *Le Grand Être,* "Ideal Humanity," to which the individual should relate himself in love and adoration. In other words, the French thinker sought a religion in which the social passion should predominate over self-interest. He held that in this predominance was the secret of personal and communal regeneration. The constitution of human nature, according to Comte, guaranteed the possibility of the change, since the heart was superior to the intellect.

This theory of the superiority of feeling had already been foreshadowed by Pascal, and later, by Rousseau. But its larger implications were stressed by Schleiermacher, who plunged into unusual depths of religious thinking, and salvaged from them a theology of his own. In so doing he rejected Catholic and Protestant Scholasticism; refashioning a Christian philosophy by means of the combination in his experience of Moravian quietism, and the metaphysics of Plato, Spinoza, Kant and Schelling. His volume on *Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers,* published in 1799,

contained the marrow of his contribution to the question. Its intense subjectivity displayed a characteristic trait of the Teutonic mind. Yet we may find therein not a few of the happiest abstractions of the scholar blended with the fervent aspirations of the saint; and what it lacks in historical perspective is partly compensated by its humanistic tone. Schleiermacher maintained that the Divine life in man resided in the emotions, and was as separate from the dominion of the mind as it was from that of dogmatic authority. His mystical interpretations of idealism and social progress were interwoven with ascriptions to the preeminence of Jesus as the Mediator of the Divine immanence in man and in society. Human consciousness of this immanence found its best exhibition, not in ecclesiastical organizations, but in the community of spiritual fellowship, animated by one Lord, one faith, and one baptism of Christ's spirit.

Under Kant's monarchical influence, later idealistic movements of philosophy tended to emphasize the importance of human personal-

ity. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who by his studies in German universities obtained a more intimate contact with the concepts of the famous German of Scotch descent, introduced them in Great Britain. Kant argued that "the teleology of Nature rested on a transcendental theology as the principle of systematic unity: a principle which connects all things according to universal and necessary natural laws, since they all have their origin in the absolute necessity of a single primal Being." [4] Coleridge shocked the evangelical divines who were as deficient in knowledge as in sympathy, by his plea for the emancipation of orthodox doctrine from its root and branch defenders. Thus alone, he insisted, could theological propositions be accorded a place compatible with their importance for the entire body of Christian truth and in the moral affection of mankind. Frederick W. Robertson, an enthusiastic disciple of Coleridge, declared that he preferred the enlightened views of the Sage of Highgate to the atrocious caricatures of

[4] *Critique of Judgment*, p. 538.

contemporary Calvinism. The practical results of this infusion of continental theological thought in the religious provincialism of Great Britain were seen in those mid-Victorian social crusades, the most significant of which was led by John Ludlow and Thomas Hughes. These laymen called themselves Christian Socialists, and among their ardent clerical allies were Frederic Denison Maurice, Julius Charles Hare, John Sterling and Charles Kingsley. They were the promoters of The Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, London, of which Maurice was the Principal until his death, after which Hughes succeeded him.

Comte's theories were promulgated in England by John Stuart Mill, aided by other literary and philosophical celebrities. He proposed to substitute humanity for God as the better known object of human devotion. He insisted that even if God existed, He would be far better satisfied with this substitution than with the formal acknowledgment of his hidden being, which current orthodoxy reckoned for righteousness. David Hume had

previously expressed the same idea in his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion.* But Mill made the familiar and remarkable concession to the original Christianity of Christ already mentioned, which virtually denatured his professed skepticism. "Religion," he wrote, "cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity: nor even now, would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life." [5]

There were a few women who fostered humanitarian enterprises in England. The notable though somewhat stormy career of Harriet Martineau cannot be recited here. But her marked intellectual gifts were nowhere more richly manifested or rewarded than in her efforts for social betterment. George Eliot was meant for a great theologian and moralist as well as a superb delineator and

[5] *Essays on Religion,* p. 255.

analyst of human life and society. In *Romola* she portrays the lurid scenes of Savonarola's last hours, which blend the sadness of disillusionment and despair with not a few of the noble elements of martyrdom. We are here made to feel the searching force of the Apostle's word: "Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail." [6] In Dinah Morris, the heroine of *Adam Bede,* the holy, believing, compassionate spirit of early Methodism has been more perfectly presented than in the pages of the best ecclesiastical historians.[7] Theological students who would know the worth and the endurance of the workingman and field laborer of the time, and also the genesis of its social reforms, should read this novel. Frederic Harrison was the last and foremost of Positivist prophets. With him its hopes of ascendancy may be said to have ended, although the prevalence of the social emphasis in modern American theories of religion is a distinct result of Positivist influence. Nor

[6] I Corinthians xiii. 8.
[7] Cf. T. G. Selby: *The Theology of Modern Fiction,* p. 15.

should the sociological theories of Herbert Spencer be forgotten. Whatever may be offered in criticism of his Agnostic philosophy, it must be conceded that he compelled English-speaking men and women everywhere to realize that the individual and society exist in reciprocal relations with each other, and that these relations are not only physiological but ethical in their nature and functions. This, indeed, is the real thesis of his *Data of Ethics.*

IV

Psychology has since come to the support of the racial point of view. There is no field of knowledge and speculation in which the difference between traditional and modern conclusions is so sharply accented as in the science of the mind. The older language of theology described the soul as a "substance." It was regarded as a self-contained entity linked in some inexplicable way to the body, and divided into separate qualities known as faculties, any one of which could act without reference to the rest. To-day psychologists do not use these

terms or constructions. Their science has scrutinized the mysterious processes of consciousness and of self-consciousness. It has brought to light the fact that the soul or self is a development, and that as such it is physically and socially conditioned. Physiological processes profoundly affect the growth and the moral qualities of consciousness. The character of a human being, as well as his limitations and accomplishments, are also largely determined by his environment.

Naturally the apprehension and transmission of the mission and the message of Jesus have been affected by this youthful but enterprising branch of ordered knowledge. It is not too much to say that contemporary science, philosophy, ethical speculation and theories of history or of society are being rewritten under the enforced recognition of the essentially social nature of personality. We have learned that the soul is not a special creation without any reference to preëxistent conditions, but that it is a product of the life of the race as truly as is the body. We have further learned

that numerous ills which handicap the individual are the inevitable results of remedial causes. Some influential thinkers insist that the preceding statement can be universalized, so that not only many, but *all* the ills to which human flesh is heir are amenable to healing measures. Yet the theory that the individual is a social deposit, and a merely incidental factor of the gigantic social evolution, involves him in a determinism even more despotic than that conceived by St. Augustine or Calvin.

There is a very serious danger in thus construing the problem of personal existence. It threatens to merge the man in the group to such an extent that he loses his identity, and with it his actual significance. The metaphysical theories of Bosanquet, for example, are Oriental in their fatalism rather than Occidental in their freedom.[1] Yet his doctrine of the individual and his destiny receives considerable support from not a few contem-

[1] Bernard Bosanquet. *The Value and Destiny of the Individual.* For a searching criticism of Bosanquet's theory, see Pringle-Pattison. *The Idea of God in the Light of Recent Philosophy*, Lectures XIV and XV.

porary scientists and philosophers. It is still possible to show, however, that the individual is the ultimate seat of value, and that all so-called social values fulfill their purpose in the ennoblement of individual life. We have but to mention the respective Gifford Lectures on this issue by Professor Pringle-Pattison, Sir W. R. Sorley,[9] and Sir Henry Jones,[10] to corroborate the foregoing statement. Nevertheless, with the peril duly posted, the cardinal truth remains that the capacities, the obligations and the achievements of the individual are to a large extent determined by his interrelations with the social structure. We shall presently observe the remarkable way in which the Gospel of Jesus does full justice to human life, alike in its individual and social aspects.

In this connection the contributions of Albrecht Ritschl marked a decisive change in our approach to the person and Gospel of the Master. It is no longer necessary to differen-

[9] *Moral Values and the Idea of God,* Lecture V.
[10] *A Faith That Enquires,* Lecture XVIII.

tiate men as Ritschlians, since the chief contentions of the celebrated German theologian are so commonly accepted that the title has ceased to be definitive. Think of Kaftan, Harnack, Herrmann and Troeltsch in Germany; of Sabatier and Ménégoz in France; of Hastings Rashdall and Alfred E. Garvie in Great Britain; of William Newton Clarke, Arthur C. McGiffert and William Adams Brown in this country. These and other eminent Christian divines in one way or another represent Ritschl's viewpoint, so that it is apparent that he has exercised an enormous influence in Protestant Christianity.[11] He was the first theologian of high standing to catch the significance of the new situation, and like most epoch-making Christian thinkers he succeeded in wresting from the Time Spirit fresh tributes for Jesus Christ. "The rising tide of social emotion," to use Benjamin Kidd's phrase, swept Ritschl back

[11] Cf. H. R. Mackintosh: *Some Aspects of Christian Belief,* Chapters VII and VIII for a sympathetic and critical estimate of Ritschlianism; also, John Baillie: *The Interpretation of Religion,* p. 282ff.

into the oceanic content of the New Testament itself. There he perceived anew and lifted into clarity the three organic concepts of Fatherhood, Sonship and Brotherhood, which found authoritative expression in the Kingdom idea. The renewed study of the mind of the Master, on the lines laid down by Ritschl and by those who developed his teachings, has given a marked emphasis to the message of Christianity, not for the individual alone, but for the individual in social relationships. This is brought out in the thought of the Christian community, which is a fellowship of believers inspired by the consciousness of Christ, who for them is at once unique and supreme. Ritschl's bold religious positivism, inherited from Luther, Calvin and Schleiermacher, assumed that the spiritual experience of believers is the heart of reality which truly explains everything else. From its data Christian thinkers may construct the total view of the universe in terms of a spiritual idealism, which magnifies the redemptive purpose of the love of God in Jesus Christ, for the moral organiza-

tion of humanity in the universal Kingdom of God.

Professor Josiah Royce, one of America's noblest philosophers, perceived the value of the Ritschlian method, and its agreement in a measure with his own thinking. That which Jesus meant by "the Kingdom of Heaven," St. Paul by "the Body of Christ," and St. John the Seer by "the New Jerusalem," was for Doctor Royce "the Beloved Community" or the Community of the Loyal. He conceived it as the end and aim of the cosmic process, a Brotherhood wide as the world in its command, fixed as the stars in the "loyalty" which is its integrating force. Jesus is its everlasting center. His death on the cross gave supreme and authentic expression to that "loyalty to loyalty," which is the ultimate law of the race and its sure path to the highest good. One of Doctor Royce's "practical maxims" is an epitome of wide areas of modern thinking upon the whole issue. He says that men and women should "judge every social device, every proposed reform, every national

and every local enterprise by the one test: Does this help towards the coming of the universal Community?" [12] If his maxim had social and political power commensurate with its ethical authority it could regenerate the life we know.

Ritschl and Royce, however, but accelerated a tendency already prevalent among Christian leaders. So far back as 1865 Sir James Seeley published in England his *Ecce Homo,* in which Jesus was presented as one who possessed a boundless "enthusiasm" for humanity. To disseminate this "enthusiasm" he created a commonwealth that "claims unlimited self-sacrifice on the part of its members, and demands that the interest and safety of the whole shall be set by each member above his own interest, and above all private interests whatever." [13] Seeley's volume was described by Doctor Marcus Dods as a boon to the Church because of its restatement of the half-forgotten truth that what Jesus gave to man-

[12] *The Problem of Christianity,* Vol. II, p. 430f.
[13] *Ecce Homo,* Chapter XXIV.

kind had significance for the *here and now.* The core of Seeley's contention was repeated by Matthew Arnold. After showing that the Old Testament's governing ideal is personal and public righteousness, the author of *Literature and Dogma* insisted that Jesus accepted this ideal, gave it its concrete content, realized it in His own person, and showed others how to realize it by obedience and love. "Nothing will do," said Arnold, "except righteousness, and no other conception of righteousness will do except Jesus' conception of it." [14]

Bishop Westcott, already acknowledged as a worthy successor in Durham's historic episcopate to Joseph Butler and John Barber Lightfoot, published in 1895 a volume of *Addresses* discussing Christianity and the collective principle. He pointed out that the Evangel of Jesus is concerned with the individual and also the society of which he is an integral part. "The thoughts . . . that men are 'one man in Christ,' sons of God and brethren suffering

[14] *Literature and Dogma,* p. 219.

and rejoicing together; that each touches all and all touch each other with an inevitable influence; that as we live *by* others we can find no rest till we live *for* others—are fundamental thoughts . . . which the Christian teacher is empowered and bound to make effective under the conditions of modern life." [15] Doctor J. Scott Lidgett, a disciple of Wesley and of Westcott, and a theologian of outstanding merits, has given further cogency to this interpretation of the social Gospel by showing that the principle of the atonement is the perfect expression of the filial and fraternal spirit which is creative of social progress. Divine sonship is at once the reason, the obligation and the inspiration of human brotherhood. Its fuller realization has immediate effects upon all human interests, and orders them in conformity to the Mind of Christ. The welfare of mankind is thus assured only as we carry out Christ's teaching of service, which is to be ungrudgingly rendered in the freedom of the sons of God, and in behalf of their fellow men,

[15] *Addresses*, p. 231ff.

even at the cost of the self-sacrifice which is the dictate of love and righteousness.[16]

Enough has been said to show that the Christian preacher is justified in rejecting the pious slogan that the Churches have "nothing to do but to save souls." Jesus is in open conflict with all palpable injustice and wrong, whether personal or communal, national or international. "The Son of God goes forth to war" against the unfair distribution of life's benefits and opportunities. He requires that flagrant violations of Christian brotherhood shall end, since they afflict the very soul of the Church Universal, and do despite to the Spirit of His grace. The fearless and equitable application of the New Testament teachings to the actualities of morals, education, politics, business, peace and war is therefore one of the essential features of the minister's program.

[16] Cf. J. Scott Lidgett: *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*, p. 414ff.

## Chapter V

# THE CHRIST OF TO-MORROW

The recent determination of the Churches to make more intimate contacts with every phase of life is aggressive because it is healthy. Not without meaning does John A. Symonds sing, after surveying the divine program for man:

These things shall be,—a loftier race
  Than e'er the world hath known shall rise
With flame of freedom in their souls,
  And light of knowledge in their eyes:

They shall be gentle, brave, and strong
  To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man's lordship firm
  On earth, and fire, and sea, and air.

Nation with nation, land with land,
  Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
  The pulse of one fraternity.

Man shall love man with heart as pure
And fervent as the young-eyed joys
Who chant their heavenly songs before
God's face with undiscordant noise.

New arts shall bloom of higher mould,
And mightier music thrill the skies,
And every life shall be a song,
When all the earth is paradise.

Sophisticated adherents of the past and pessimists who are chief mourners at the hearse of Time may deprecate the rapturous unrestraint of such glowing stanzas. Yet these are no more confident that Christ owns the future than He was Himself; and their vivid images but reproduce in other words the forecasts of Biblical prophecy. These furthermore denote what might be described as Christianity's latest Social Creed, born again in our day of the spirit and precepts of its Risen Head. This creed contemplates the establishment of those conditions in society which secure equal and speedy justice, and the full and untrammeled exercise of their legitimate rights for all members of the human race, wherever found. Truly the social conscience of institutional

religion has been amazingly revived, educated and disciplined during the past decade. In the United States that conscience is increasingly sensitive concerning non-social methods and practices which afflict the well-being of the people. Thanks to its remonstrances, these ills are very much less than they recently were. But despite this relief, they are still monstrous and unendurable in the estimates of those whose vision has been purified by the Light Giver. A growing number in the Churches, and among the young people of both sexes whom the Churches have yet to win, recognize that it is the mission of our religion to preach and practice at any hazard the brotherhood of man. Until this is done, the doctrine of God's Fatherhood is little more than a speculation in divinity. Hence the increasing body of believers who are resolute for the maintenance of the moral ideals of Jesus, which recreate and develop the noblest instincts and aspirations of our fellow creatures.

This gratifying phase has been reached through the arduous labors of pioneers in

thought, word and deed, whose sacrifices in its behalf enhance their social importance. When their names are recalled those of Josiah Strong, Richard T. Ely and Washington Gladden should not be omitted. In 1895, a date now long ago and far away, measured by the rapidity of our ethical progress, President DeWitt Hyde of Bowdoin College, Maine, published his *Outlines of Social Theology,* in which he insisted that Christ's Christianity and that of His Apostles was "preeminently a social movement," based upon principles which generated the present disposition to regard everything from the communal rather than the individualistic viewpoint. Seven years later Henry Churchill King's *Theology and the Social Consciousness* appeared, and challenged some traditional positions of the household of Faith. The Ex-president of Oberlin College declared that "the social consciousness is so deep and significant a phenomenon in the ethical life of our time, that it cannot be ignored by the theologian who means to bring his message really home." The series of books by Profes-

sor Francis G. Peabody of Harvard breathe the passion for humanity which the Master displayed. Doctor Peabody's *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character, Jesus Christ and the Social Question,* and *The Christian Life in the Modern World* manifest a comprehensive appreciation of the actual facts of life, combined with a deeply spiritual understanding of their crying needs. Professor Walter Rauschenbusch may not have been a trained philosopher nor a technical theologian, but his volume, *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* restates and amplifies the ideas he had previously advanced in his two works on *Christianity and the Social Crisis,* and *Christianizing the Social Order.*

These works, without exception, were offered to the believing world when it relied, in the main, upon the spread of the Gospel by sacramental or evangelistic agencies. They flamed with the light kindled by a Christlike love for mankind, and fed by the wisdom due to persistent and searching reflection. That light played on the semi-darkness in which not a few sincere but mistaken Christians had hid-

den themselves from their Lord's more perfect will. It summoned the Churches to a more strenuous and beneficent interpretation of the Evangel than they were wont to exemplify, and one which indicated its superiority by the opposition it aroused among those who sat at ease in Zion, supposing all was well with others because all was well with them. I should like to make extended reference to such telling contributions as *The Church and the Changing Order,* by Dean Shailer Mathews, *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* by Gerald Birney Smith, *Christianity and Social Science,* by Charles A. Ellwood, and similarly excellent books, too numerous and important to be dismissed in this summary fashion but for lack of space. They signalize the reluctant passing of the pure individualism of American methods of evangelization, and also the mergence of its better qualities in Social Evangelism. The process is tardy because traditionalists cling to the old wine, and hesitate to quaff the new. They still adhere to the erstwhile victorious strategies which a revolutionized situation has

seriously impaired. Meanwhile, a vacuum abhorrent to lovers of God's Kingdom prevails in many Churches, and this transitional period has its symptoms in lessened attendance upon and interest in their ministrations.

Nevertheless, Christianity's institutional forces are at last face to face in this Republic with Christ's redemptive designs for the children of men. In their realignment theology will be rejuvenated, and a brighter era dawn. The consciousness of man's sins against his brother man, and of the sufferings these sins create, is no more keen or clamant than the longing for peace through the righteousness of Christ in millions of hearts which accept the social implications of His message.[1]

The claim that the tenets of His Gospel are susceptible of incorporation into the social structure, and that they were originally intended so to be, does not rest on forced meanings or esoteric allusions. *The Acts of the Apostles* itself validates it. These earliest annals of the Apostolic Church record

[1] Cf. Francis J. McConnell: *Humanism and Christianity*, 63 ff.

the new Faith at work in the old world which it was destined to overcome. Its conquests were not confined to individuals whom it so conspicuously changed. A social consciousness embracing revolutionizing ideals, principles and forces, hitherto unknown to contemporary Jewish thought or to the Roman rule, was plainly perceptible in the converts of Pentecost. The story of how they lived to love and serve in the transforming life of their Risen Lord is familiar to readers of the New Testament. His Spirit preëmpted them. Beneath His welcome constraint they threw off supposedly fixed habits of thought and action, discarded ancient dogmatisms, set aside for a time the laws governing property, looking upon it as no longer sacrosanct for themselves, but as a means of service for brotherhood.[2] In this manner the original Christian Community rose above the formidable barriers of social caste and imperialism. It became in word and deed a Divine society, patterned after the fellowship of Heaven, and one in which the good

[2] *Acts* ii. 42-47; iv. 32-37; v. 1-16.

of each was the concern of all. Its members displayed a forbearance and a confidence created by their mutual love; a good will given to infinite expansion; and a general disposition of heart and mind toward their fellow men which, could it be universalized, would fulfill the Ideal of which William Morris sang centuries later:

> Then all Mine and all Thine shall be
> Ours, and no more shall any man crave
> For riches that serve for nothing but to
> Fetter a friend for a slave.[3]

Here the three characteristics of Christ's teaching were expressed for the first time in ways congruous with the modern demand for a religion which shall enter into definite and saving relations with human society. The first characteristic is His emphasis upon *the absolute worth of man.* In an age notorious for its callousness, cruelty, and contempt for human life, He repeatedly verified the fixed and unalterable values of every soul. A man, said he, is better than a sheep; better than a herd

[3] *The Day is Coming.*

of swine; better than a holy day; better than a sacred ritual; better than anything else in the visible world. From man all things else receive their evaluation; toward him they gravitate for his moral development. The second characteristic is that of *social obligation.* The Master's avowal of man's unique supremacy in the creative order necessarily carries with it his equal obligation to every member of his own order. The third characteristic is *sacrificial love.* Doctor Edwin Lewis, who has interpreted Evangelical theology in impressive and fruitful ways, declares that "we shall not be far wrong if we say that Jesus' whole life was dominated by the spirit of sacrificial love; that He was in the world to make dominant everywhere the spirit of sacrificial love; that He made the possession of the spirit of sacrificial love the one sign of membership in His Kingdom; and that *therefore in the degree in which that spirit comes to prevail in the hearts of men, the Kingdom of God becomes a realized fact.*" [4]

[4] *Jesus Christ and the Human Quest,* p. 111ff.

An examination of the whole situation as it exists leaves little room for doubt that the abolition of social maladjustments and transgressions is found in habitual obedience to the temper and the teachings of Jesus. It may be asked, however, whether He regarded His commands as absolute and final legislation, or whether He was simply establishing a general legislative principle, the applications of which were left to time and circumstances. This question has been exhaustively discussed from both viewpoints. Those who support the first position adduce numerous instances which seem to ratify their contention. What about his rulings concerning unchastity, vindictiveness, the love of one's enemies, the hoarding of wealth, the indulgence of useless anxiety? [5] If these "laws" of the Kingdom were binding only upon those to whom they were originally given, it must be acknowledged that Christ's ethical teachings reveal serious limitations. Those who maintain the second position insist that when Jesus seemed to authorize specific

[5] *St. Matthew*, v-vii.

maxims, He was dealing with particular persons and situations. For example, His decision that the rich young ruler should sell all his goods, and give the proceeds to the poor, was intended to correct the love of wealth which prevented the otherwise excellent applicant's discipleship.[6] Certainly Jesus did not require Zaccheus, Joseph of Arimathea or other temporally prosperous followers of His to relinquish their earthly holdings. Similar considerations are involved in His washing of the feet of the disciples. This act, it is urged, was local to the hallowed scenes of the Last Supper. Its significance was immediate, and present-day Christians who repeat it do so as literalists.[7]

Furthermore the Master did not expressly forbid human slavery, war, abstinence from intoxicating liquors, or from other injurious practices. If therefore Christians are to regard His teachings and mandates as constituting a perfect code, covering all conceivable

[6] *St. Matthew* xix. 16ff.
[7] *St. John* xiii. 1ff.

conditions which may arise, such a code often leaves them ignorant of what they should do. Relief from this difficulty, we are told, is in the realization that Jesus laid down a general legislative principle, capable of the widest application, and of which He gave some striking examples. The truth is that both parties to the dispute have sufficient facts at their disposal to justify their respective contentions. But, as we have seen, the principle in question is that of sacrificial love. It implicates a believer's personal interest in the well being of all men. It further implicates the utmost personal endeavor to promote that well being. Hence Christian love is not an ephemeral passion. It does not sigh for wretchedness while shunning the wretched.[8] It motivates the surrender of self for the good of the race through his eyes, and knows its possibilities for betterment in the light of His knowledge. He shows us how boundless a man's horizon may be, "how vast, yet of what clear trans-

[8] Cf. Coleridge's poem: "Reflections on Having Left a Place of Retirement."

parency," and what an infinite realm to fill with devoted toil which is its own reward is still left to every responsive soul. Hence nominal believers, whose hearts are foreign to the sovereign rule of love and sacrifice, have not yet received the Lord of all true life.

Turn once more to His teachings, in which He repeatedly enforced the primacy of His sacrificial love. The fatal lack of its governing principle was illustrated in the Elder Brother of the Parable of the Prodigal Son; in the unmerciful servant who figures in the Parable of Forgiveness; in the complaints of their fellow workers against the late comers in the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard; in the rejected souls who appear in the Master's tremendous description of the Day of Judgment. He also illustrated its positive consequences. The heart of God overflows in His Parable of the Good Samaritan.[9] It is the classic example of that Divine truth which entered in through the lowly door of stories

[9] *St. Luke* xv. 11ff.; *St. Matt.* xviii. 23ff.; xx. 1ff.; xxv. 31ff.; *St. Luke* x. 30ff.

taken by Jesus from the daily life of the people. It teaches that though "religion has many dialects, many diverse complexions, it has but one true voice, the voice of human pity, of mercy, of patient justice." [10]

Since Christ's words were first uttered in Nazareth and Capernaum, they have arrested those who really believed them. To possess the self-sacrificial love which He poured forth in Galilee and Judæa is to engage, as did its Giver, in the fight against disease and death; to minister to the necessities of the outcast and the despised; to champion the cause of the oppressed; to extend a helping hand to defeated and despairing souls who yet essay to rise again. This love, which is the height of good, the hate of ill, the triumph of truth, the overthrow of falsehood, renders its possessors indifferent, as Jesus was, to personal benefit or prestige. They are concerned only to give service in fullest measure, pressed down and running over. They are willing, as He was, to endure discomfort, pain and even death itself,

[10] John, Viscount Morley: *Recollections*, Vol. I, p. 189.

if by their sufferings others can be aided; and to shatter, as He did, the shackles of error and sin which chafe and burden their fellows, cost what it may. Such love blesses both the lover and the beloved. It recognizes the stranger, the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked and the downfallen, as children of the one Father and brethren of the one Christ. It succors all who are disconsolate or undone because it is the holy love of God, made manifest through Christ to all men.

II

If therefore Jesus did not vouchsafe maxims sufficiently numerous and explicit to include all the problems of to-day's complex life; if He did not definitely speak upon the modern questions of internationalism, or of economic and industrial justice and its relative issues, it by no means follows that these problems, questions and issues are exempt from His jurisdiction. On the contrary, they cannot be permanently settled by any other ruling or control. Their understanding and relief

now enjoy more favorable prospects than heretofore, because the contentions they involve are no longer waged in "a dumb, listless, illiterate world." It is an open controversy between "the mind which was in Christ," and the resuscitated Paganism of unadulterated individualism and nationalism. The conflict is fraught with moral and religious consequences that cover the honorable diplomacies of States and the perpetuity of their security and concord; the social reconstruction dictated by the New Testament temper and program; the reconciliation of divergent forms of sacred truth; the simplification of its creedal statements; the maintenance of the essential spiritualities of the Biblical Faith. In short, it bears directly upon the building of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The ferocious cruelties of an unparalleled war have driven home these reflections. That war exposed the indescribable evils which even knowledge and culture incur when separated from Christ's lordship. It also emphasized

the social demoralization which is the inescapable consequence of hate, greed, treachery, pride and physical conflict. At such a crisis, the magnitude of which baffles imagination, the Church must restore civilization to those ends from which it has been deflected. She is "bound by her nature 'to reduce to the One' the tangled skein of human life." [11] Whatever the errors, the rectifications, the risks or the losses this obligation entails, Catholic and Protestant, Fundamentalist and Modernist, are alike bound to gird themselves afresh for its discharge. Had they bestowed the same assiduous care upon the expression in their policies and deeds of sacrificial love which they devoted to their respective peculiarities of belief, the world might have escaped the soul sickening catastrophe which overtook it in 1914. And if the fires of this infernal wrath shall purge the Church Universal of her dross, sanctify her for the noblest ideals of her faith,

[11] Ernest Barker: *National Character and the Factors in Its Formation*, p. 212.

and for the service necessary to attain them, then even that vial of destruction will not have been poured out for naught.[12]

Mankind will not be Christianized by Catholics or Protestants until statesmen and nations are convinced that "the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done," and in the strength of that conviction they relegate their armaments to the scrap heap. This does not mean that war can be straightway legislated out of existence any more than can marital infidelity, class prejudice, race discrimination, gambling, drunkenness, the despotisms of capital and labor or similar iniquities. To be sure, legislation can greatly help, but it requires the educational backgrounds which spell ninety per cent of genuine reform, and insure that support of public opinion without which the best laws fall short of their intention. Professor Alfred Zimmern points out that a great deal of collaboration hitherto evidenced did not carry far because "the doers

[12] Cf. the Author's, *The Three Religious Leaders of Oxford*, p. 586ff.

and the routineers" who were in control showed scant hospitality to the thinkers. If power is not to pass in increasing measure into irresponsible hands, and if the ghastly paradox of reason become the servant of unreason is to cease, there must be international intellectual coöperation "of the world of thought, the scholars, the writers, the artists and the educators with the world of action." Civilization will thus have control of its environment and prevent the otherwise irresistible drift to disaster. Best of all there will be established "a society in which men are free to live a truly human life and to perfect their spiritual faculties." [18]

We have already seen that the program which insures the highest welfare of mankind is found in the character and teaching of Jesus. It should therefore be our business to exemplify and disseminate His spirit until He shall reign in the heart and conscience of all men and women. They dread and oppress one another because that spirit is not in them.

[18] Alfred Zimmern: *Learning and Leadership*, p. 78ff.

Husbands and wives sever their domestic ties, and frequently visit the results of marital perfidy upon their innocent children, because they lack His gifts of forbearance and consecration. Negroes and whites, or dwellers in the Orient and the Occident, despoil their joint heritage as the offspring of God for the same reason. It is likewise the explanation of the suspicions and jealousies of employers and employees. The world's woes and tragedies, which make history a melancholy record, are to be largely ascribed to this source. The very monotony of these tremendous disasters enforces the solemn duty of all who name the Name which is above every name, to make it synonymous with new life and new hope for the entire human family.

Destructive absolutisms in any realm, and especially in that of economics, can only be removed as we have "a more exalted morality, a higher degree of humanity and a loftier religion," proceeding from the Ideal and the inspiration of Jesus. Well may Doctor Thomas G. Masaryk, first President of the

Czechoslovak Republic, insist that "it is our task to make realities of the religion and ethics of Jesus, of His pure and immaculate religion of humanity. He saw in the love of God and of one's neighbor the fulfilment of the whole Law and the Prophets, the foundations of religion and morality. All else is accessory." [14]

The gradual perfecting of the social order is therefore nothing more nor less than the gradual enthronement of Jesus as the Christ and Redeemer of that order. Archbishop Temple of York, England, wisely observes that we cannot say men must be first made perfect and their social order perfected afterwards; for we must have regard to the educative value of the political and social order. "But," he continues, "we shall pray and work to secure in all citizens the Christian spirit, with the full and potent expectation that as it grows it will progressively establish a Christian social order." [15]

It is a common criticism of the Ideal of

[14] *The Making of a State*, p. 452. Cf. also Benjamin Kidd's posthumous volume, *The Science of Power*.

[15] *Essays in Christian Politics*, p. 81.

Jesus that it is incapable of application to the actual world in which we live. Professor Robinson, in *The Mind in the Making,* refers with some acerbity to the claim that the practical problems of this day can be solved by such "sentimentalities" as the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Their solution, he contends, is to be found in scientific insight and scientific control. Why then waste our limited gifts on theories which are too vague and doctrinaire for effective reciprocity with real conditions? No sane interpreter of the religion of Jesus proposes to dispense with "scientific insight and scientific control." But he maintains that they must be baptized into Christ or encounter the liability of their prostitution to base ends. Science requires moralization as much as any other branch of human thought or activity.[16] In no other way can we halt the further enlistment of inventions and discoveries in the work of devastation they have already expedited. Professor Zimmern reminds us that modern science has tempted men

[16] Cf. Kirtley F. Mather: *Science in Search of God.*

to forget the end in the means. His indictment is none too severe that, "Science has done damage to the spiritual interests of mankind not by what it has achieved but by what it has forgotten in the moment of achievement." [17]

Nations will one day perceive the reasonableness of Christ's supremacy in His revelation of God's will respecting men, and that their restoration to His creative purpose is contained in the life and expressed in the teaching of His Son. They will discern in Him that principle which I have endeavored to set forth, and will recognize that it is capable of application to every personal and social relationship. Should they be tempted to put from them what is here argued because, forsooth, it is a mere dream of enthusiasts; should they set out to refute it, seducing themselves with the vain conceit that they know more feasible schemes, and making an idol of the blood-stained past, they will find, perhaps too late, that the principle of self-sacrificing love cannot be so easily overthrown.

[17] *Learning and Leadership*, p. 76f.

In his individual as in his social life, man is constituted with specific reference to that great principle. Its essentials are lodged in the soul beneath all being. A heart of honor, of justice and of love beats at the center of the universe. The stars in their courses fight for the establishment of Christ's law. Hence the Christian outlook, as He created it, brings humanity into harmonious relations both with itself and with the actual world. "If we are to serve our fellow-men effectively in the conditions of modern life, it is necessary through scientific knowledge and the increasing use of quantitative methods to gain control of our environment in order that we may subdue it to humane ends. Into this indispensable task of modern civilization Christians may help to infuse the right spirit—the spirit which seeks truth, is afraid of no facts, harbors no prejudices, condones no injustice, and sets the common good above all sectional and selfish interests." [18]

Professor Hocking of Harvard sustains

[18] J. H. Oldham: *Christianity and the Race Problem*, p. 240.

Mr. Oldham's statements in words characteristic of a first class philosopher who also believes that the true way of life for men is found in the Master. He suggests that when Jesus commanded His disciples to love God and love man He actually meant what He said, and that the command itself guaranteed its possibility. Original Christianity, as Doctor Hocking regards it, has suffered grievous wrongs at the hands of its alleged interpreters. Many of these have robbed it of its distinction by reducing its audacity to their compromising levels. They have sought to bring Christ down to the naturalistic plane of unregenerated humanity, rather than to lift humanity to the height of Christ. There is no desirable future for us except as we assure it by making the life which is of and in Jesus the true life alike of Church and State, and the recognized norm of individual existence. The professor concludes that while from one point of view, "Love your enemies" is an impossible command, it is the only way in which the enemy can be conquered. He is unsubdued until his

love is won, and love is evoked by love, not by hostility.[19]

Hence, "Resist not evil" is not a counsel commending weakness, but strength. The real reason why so many men and women stand apart and critically survey Christ's valiant ethic is because they have not the moral courage to accept it. His teachings are not milk for babes but meat for the strong. The decisive enterprise of the Church Universal therefore is to universalize the Spirit of her Lord, and this is the spirit of "regard for the other," whoever he may be. Her priesthood calls for consecrated spirits who shall fill up "that which is lacking in the sufferings of Christ"; for the complete emancipation of the race from ignorance, folly and sin. Her chief function is not merely to maintain a splendid tradition, but to be here and now the *alter ego* of her Redeemer, summoning mankind to a glorious adventure in Him, with His own presence to lead the advance. The things dividing the

[19] Cf. William E. Hocking: *Human Nature and Its Remaking*, revised edition, p. 372 ff,

Churches to-day are largely inherited, and for the majority of her non-adherents they no longer have important meaning. It is high time that believers awoke to the true nature of the Church as priestly in the continuity of her past, yet prophetic in her determination to launch out into the deep at the behest of the Shepherd and Bishop of all souls, who is "the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever."

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